



NEWSLETTER OF THE LONDON CHAPTER,
ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



c/o London Museum of Archaeology
1600 Attawandaron Road, London, ON N6G 3M6

September/October 2006

06-5 & 06-6

The next **Speaker Night** is **Thursday January 11th, 2007**. The speaker will be **Christine Boston**, of the Department of Anthropology, UWO. She will speak on her research in Chile in a presentation entitled: *Los Chinchorros, Arsenic, and the Worlds's Oldest Mummies*.

See the last page of this issue and the flier for breaking news on the February 15th Members' Night activities.

The meeting will be held at 8 pm at the London Museum of Archaeology, 1600 Attawandaron Road, near the corner of Wonderland & Fanshawe Park Road, in the northwest part of the city.

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ANNUAL RATES

Student	\$15.00
Individual	\$18.00
Institutional	\$21.00
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Where's the Big Picture? Late Woodland Settlement along the Sydenham River: A Case for Long Term Investigation

David Riddell

Introduction

Since 1991, I have been documenting Late Woodland settlement along the Sydenham River in southwestern Ontario from Strathroy to Dresden (from surface survey, photo-documentation of collections, and test-excavation). The rationale that I have been following during this process is that in order to better understand the development of, and relationships that occur among the settlements that we are studying, we need to approach a given area within a long-term framework of investigation, which necessarily entails a regional perspective (Riddell 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2000).

When we can study a region encompassing a watershed(s) that is composed of settlements that are roughly contemporaneous, we can begin to propose links between these sites based on comparative samples. While intra-site information has also been a part of this particular study, my long-term focus has been that of establishing relationships between neighbouring groups. However, I have based much of my findings on four sites in particular, although I have been able to provide related 'clues' from other neighbouring settlements that have had less thorough investigation.

I suggest that both "Western Basin Springwells" and "Middle Ontario Iroquoian" populations in this region during this time period were influenced by, and likely comprised of any number of groups of social and ethnic affiliation. I propose that this period, and particularly so this region, was the scene of developing "ethnicity," perhaps to a greater extent than that of the earlier Late Woodland period. I also propose that the (later extended) Haagsma Site dwelling was quite possibly the scene of the formation of a community composed of a long-distance expression of a Western Basin Springwells group, and a "western" population of Middle Ontario Iroquoians. This latter population in itself may have been the result of the development (if only in part) of an in-situ regional group with peripheral influences (both east and west, and north and south, for that matter). The slightly later Miller Site on the other hand may have also been an expression of a mingling of ethnic influences, but with the ceramics displaying a much greater degree of homogeneity, perhaps indicating a more cohesive social entity.

The Setting, and the Sites

Figure 1 illustrates the study area along the Sydenham River in southwestern Ontario, from the Strathroy area to Dresden. We can see that this region lies in between the intensively investigated London area to the east and Late Woodland settlement, which has been characterized as "Iroquoian," and the little investigated and poorly understood area to the west, with those sites that have been characterized as "Western Basin." This region has perhaps been regarded a "frontier" as much in terms of the lack of investigation as the proposed theories of the movements of either Iroquoian

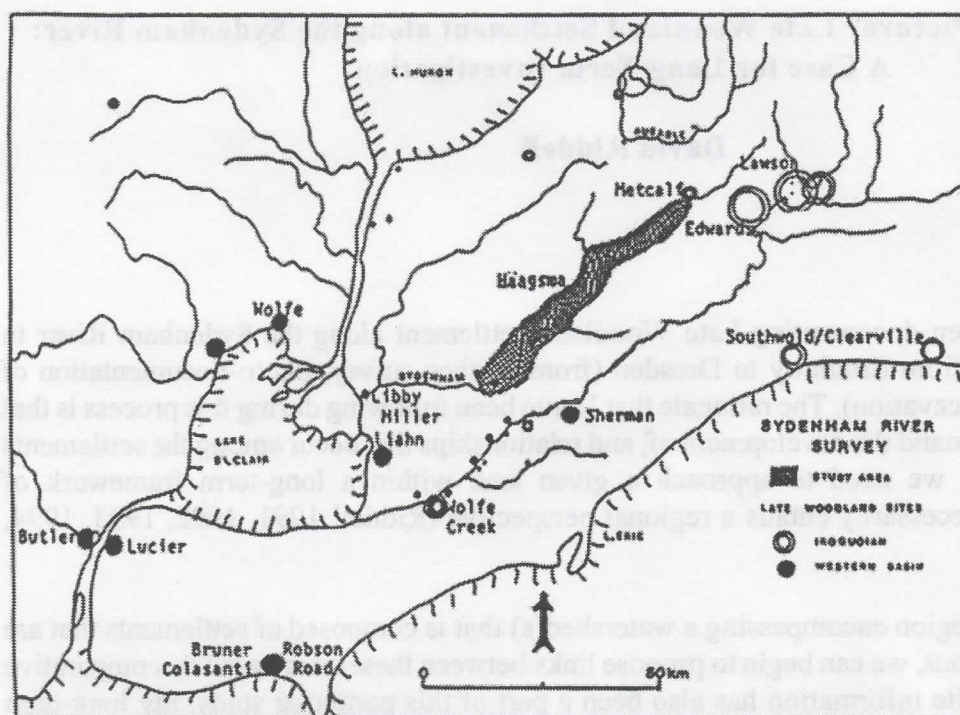


Figure 1: Location of Study Area and Late Woodland Sites in Southwestern Ontario

or Western Basin populations. Nonetheless, based on the settlement that I have documented in this region, I believe that there was a likelihood that this area was regarded a distant land, or a peripheral zone on behalf of at least one group of people, which I will elaborate on during the course of the discussion.

The study area lies within the unique Carolinian Biotic Zone, a region that

retains its floral and faunal diversity, similar to that of regions further southward in the United States. This species diversity undoubtedly had a bearing on the nature of the settlement represented during the time frame under study. The primary physiographic features meanwhile that determine the location of the 14th and 15th century Late Woodland settlements are high sandy loam river bank sites and sand plain ridges and knolls.

One of the apparent indications of a possible frontier is the clustering of substantial Late Woodland settlement of the fourteenth to fifteenth century range in the Alvinston area, while there appears to be little settlement of this nature further downstream (until one reaches the Lake/River St. Clair divide). Recent investigations however, have revealed that at least two later Late Woodland settlements, supposedly of a substantial size, were destroyed by agricultural practices several decades ago (Kominek and Wortner, personal communications). These sites were located near Dresden, and are the subject of ongoing investigation as to the possibility of salvageable remains. Fortunately, one settlement in this area, which has only been partially destroyed, has been recently test-excavated, and will be discussed. On the other hand, there appears to be relatively well-represented settlements of the earlier Late Woodland time frame widespread along the river. Within the study area, I have concentrated on what I term the "mid-range" Late Woodland temporal frame, from roughly 1300 AD to 1500 AD, however, I will also refer to "Initial Late Woodland" (I.L.W.) settlement documented within this region (900 A.D. - 1300 A.D.).

In particular, I will focus on a group of sites situated within an approximately twenty kilometre stretch of the Sydenham, which have produced evidence of artifact and settlement patterns

pertaining to "Western Basin Springwells" and "Middle Ontario Iroquoian"(MOI) groups. These sites exhibit both a contrast and a blending of certain ceramic traits, the evidence of which is most convincing on the most thoroughly investigated site: Haagsma. The data from these sites raises questions of whether the observed evidence is a result of in-situ development, a migrating population(s), long-distance contact, or combinations of these factors.

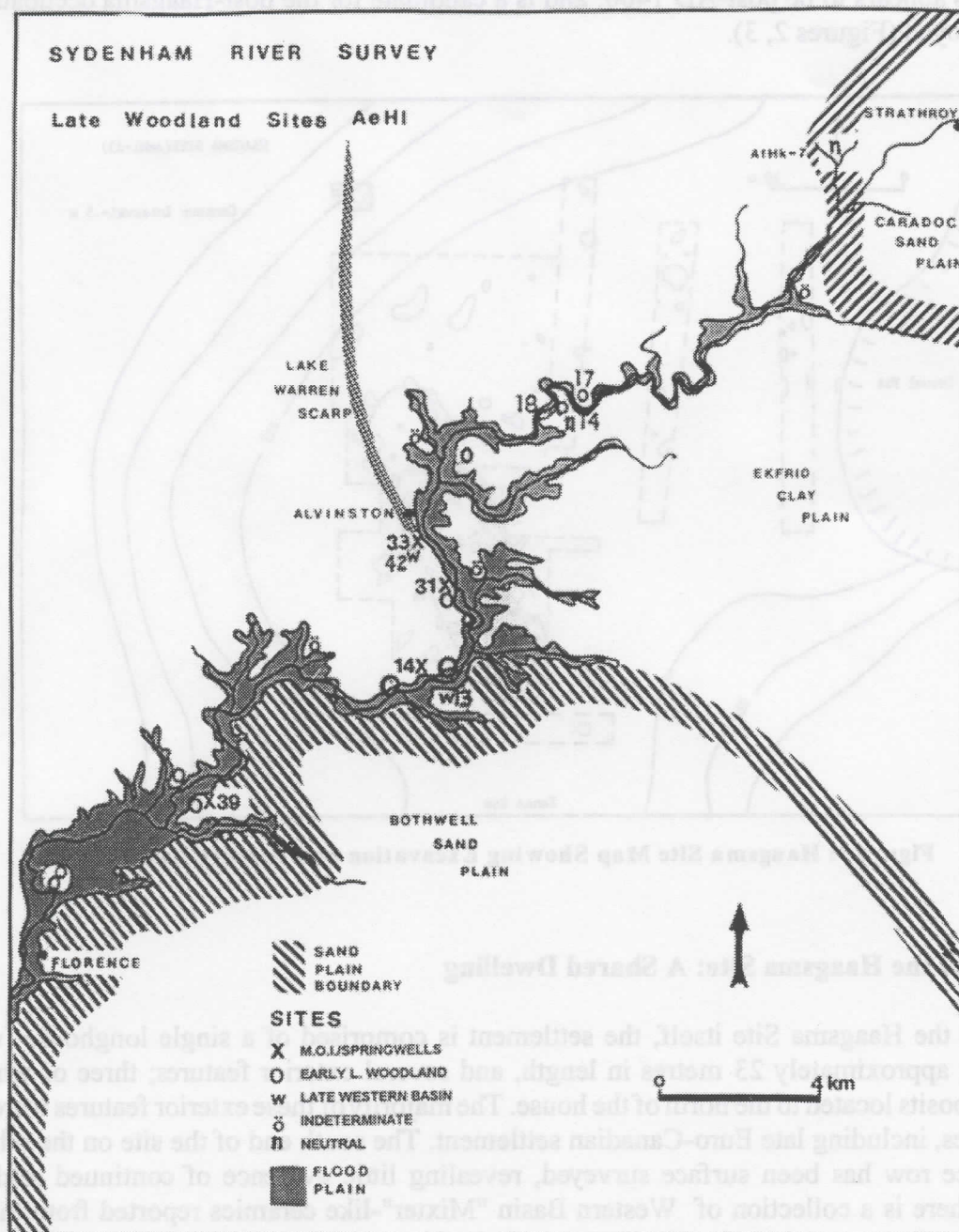


Figure 2: Location of Sites in Study Area. Numbers indicate Borden designation.

The sites that I will primarily refer to during the course of this discussion are the Haagsma Site (AeHl-33), the Cemetery Site (AeHl-31), the Himey Site (AeHl-32), and the Banjo Site (AeHl-39). I will also briefly discuss the Miller Site (AdHm-55), located some 30 kilometers downstream from the latter site. Each of these sites are situated on similar geophysical features, which has been a source of modern aggregate extraction. As such, a settlement adjacent to Haagsma (which from collections appears to be post-AD 1400, and is a candidate for the post-Haagsma occupation) has been destroyed (Figures 2, 3).

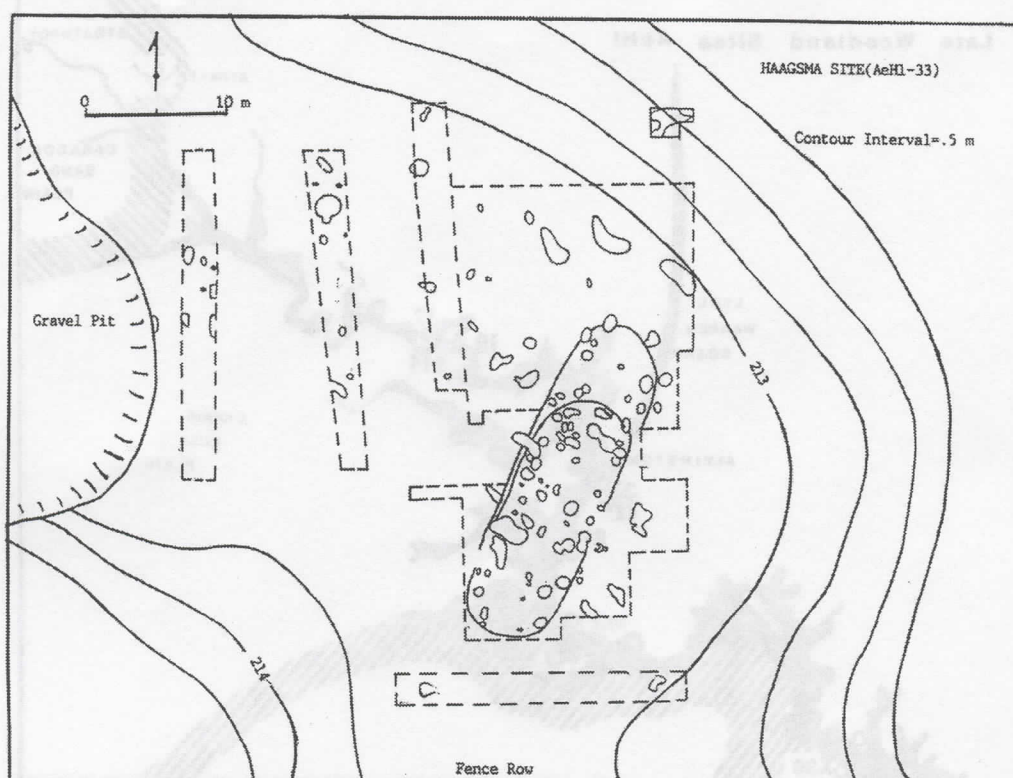


Figure 3: Haagsma Site Map Showing Excavation and Feature Locations.

The Case of the Haagsma Site: A Shared Dwelling

Turning to the Haagsma Site itself, the settlement is comprised of a single longhouse (with an extension), approximately 23 metres in length, and several exterior features; three of which are midden deposits located to the north of the house. The majority of these exterior features were recent disturbances, including late Euro-Canadian settlement. The south end of the site on the other side of the fence row has been surface surveyed, revealing little evidence of continued settlement, however, there is a collection of Western Basin "Mixer"-like ceramics reported from this area. Despite several test-trenches placed adjacent to the longhouse and sand pit, no other structures (wall posts) were defined. Within the longhouse I have defined several support post clusters that border

three basic feature cluster areas. These feature clusters have in turn been defined in terms of temporal and cultural provenance. The semi-circular feature is the only hearth that has been located within the settlement; interestingly, an exterior hearth (Figures 3 & 4).

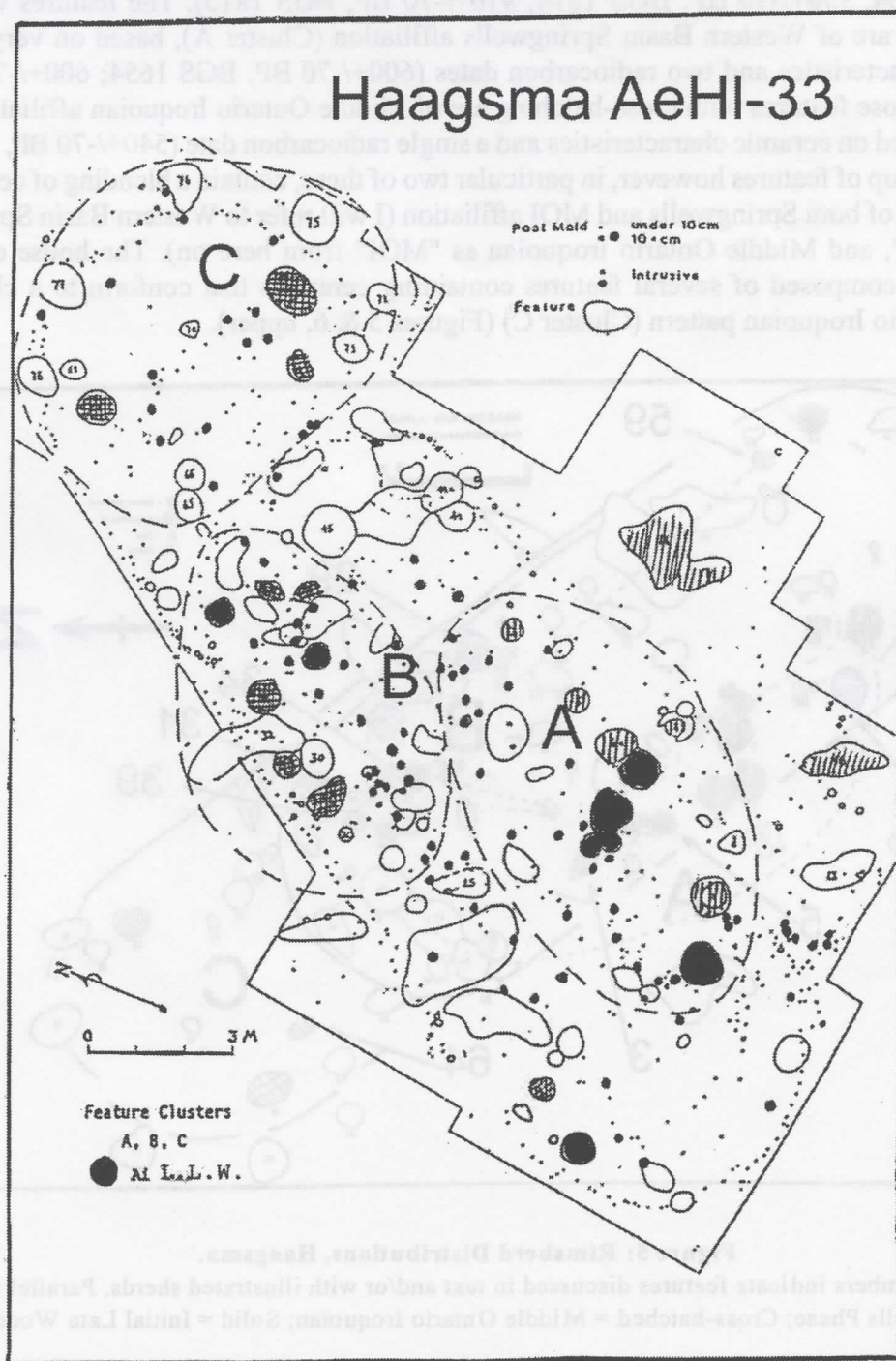


Figure 4: Location of Feature Clusters, Haagsma.

Springwells features = parallel, vertical lines; Middle Ontario Iroquoian features = cross-hatched lines. Solid = Initial Late Woodland.

The features shaded dark are of Initial Late Woodland affiliation, based on ceramic characteristics and three radiocarbon dates (some of these "characteristics" however, i.e., rib-paddling bodysherd treatments, are normally associated with a later time frame than the dates would indicate: 980 \pm 80 BP, BGS 1664; 936 \pm 70 BP, BGS 1814; 916 \pm 70 BP, BGS 1815). The features with parallel vertical lines are of Western Basin Springwells affiliation (Cluster A), based on very distinctive ceramic characteristics and two radiocarbon dates (600 \pm 70 BP, BGS 1654; 600 \pm 70 BP, BGS 1655), and those features with cross-hatching are of Middle Ontario Iroquoian affiliation (Cluster B), again based on ceramic characteristics and a single radiocarbon date (540 \pm 70 BP, BGS 1680). The latter group of features however, in particular two of these, contain a blending of ceramic styles characteristic of both Springwells and MOI affiliation (I will refer to Western Basin Springwells as "Springwells", and Middle Ontario Iroquoian as "MOI" from here on). The house extension in contrast was composed of several features containing ceramics that conform to a characteristic Middle Ontario Iroquoian pattern (Cluster C) (Figures 5 & 6, upper).

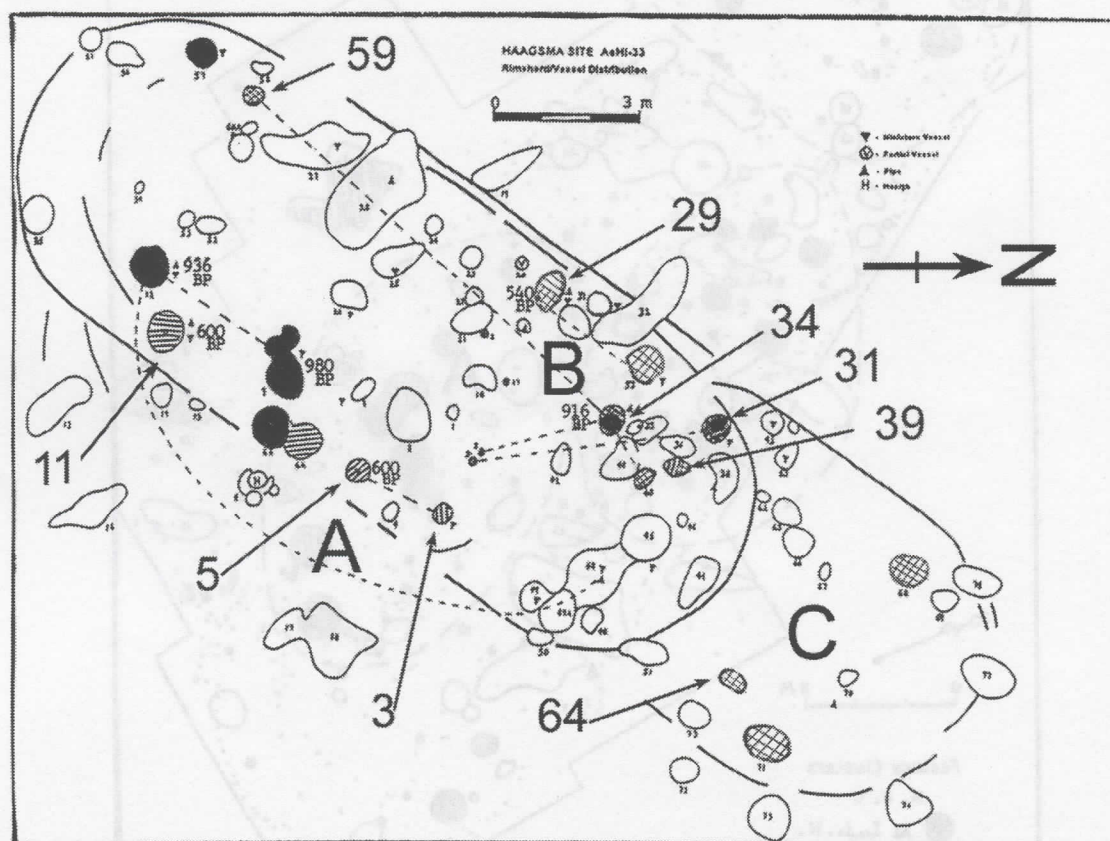


Figure 5: Rimsherd Distributions, Haagsma.

Large numbers indicate features discussed in text and/or with illustrated sherds. Parallel lines = Springwells Phase; Cross-hatched = Middle Ontario Iroquoian; Solid = Initial Late Woodland.

From Figure 4 we can see the support post locations in relation to the feature groups. An interesting aspect of this site is the frequency and types of artifacts that are contained within the support post bases (i.e., faunal and ceramic). Rather than assuming that these deposits are the result of purely

'accidental' or 'functional' practices, I contend that at least several of these large post molds containing in particular, Blandings turtle shell, rimsherds of the M.O.I. affinity, a polished bone ("sucking") tube, and several awls, are of symbolic significance, which I also believe is related to the sharing of this structure by Springwells and MOI groups (i.e., symbolic of interaction on some level, whether actual, fictive, or perhaps even entailing the 'fear' of interaction, such as boundary definition).

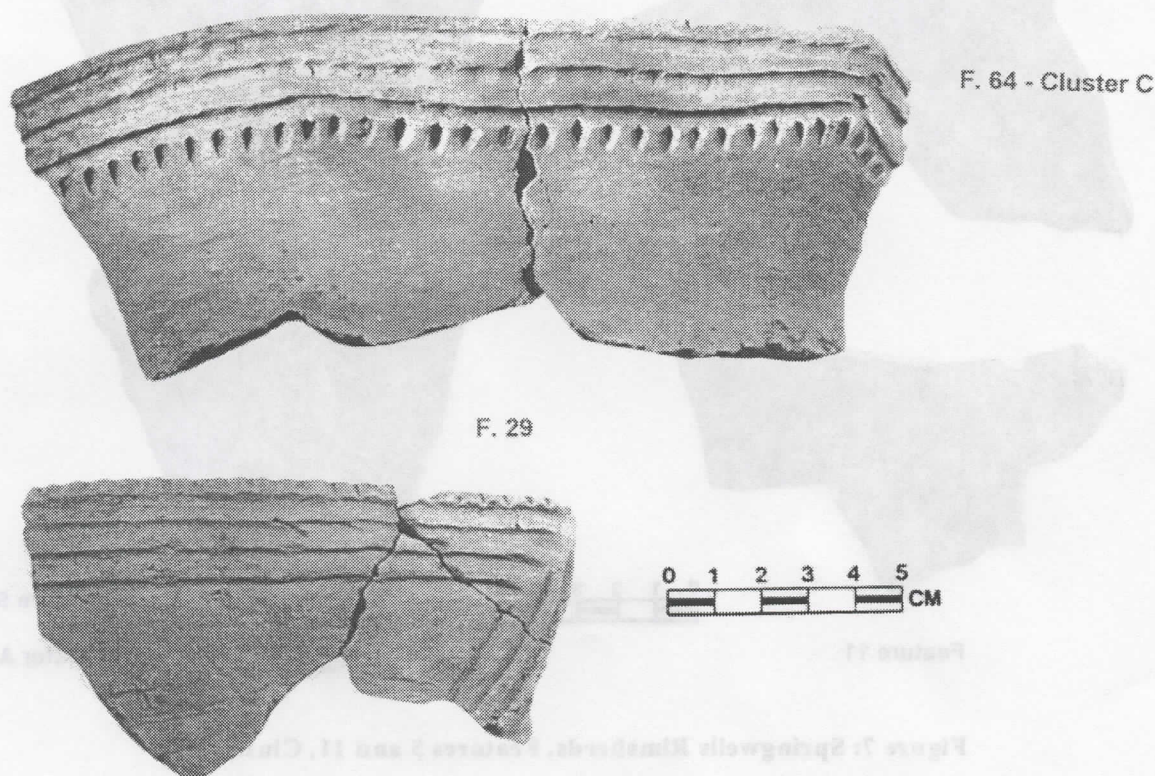


Figure 6: Rimsherds from Features 64 (upper) and 29 (lower).

What I will address initially (and pertinent to this regional perspective) is the sharing of this longhouse, which perhaps occurred on primarily separate occasions (that is, with the Springwells group occupying the house long after its abandonment by the Initial Late Woodland group, and prior to the arrival of the MOI group). I also believe however, that there was a good possibility of an encounter at some point between the Springwells and MOI peoples. The radiocarbon dates support a sequence of separate occupations, but the calibration 'margin of error' between the Springwells and MOI occupations is within a range that could entail contemporaneous settlement. More significantly however, I contend that there is other evidence to support a potential meeting between these groups. On the one hand, they have chosen to locate on opposite sides/ends of the house, whereas if they were there at separate time periods exclusively, one might expect either occupation to reflect use of the whole structure (however, it is likely that the Springwells and MOI groups numbered perhaps less than 20 individuals each). The Springwells component in terms of ceramics is comprised of primarily "Macomb Linear" woven fibre horizontal decoration on the rimsherds, a distinguishing

trait of the "western" ceramic assemblages (i.e. Michigan) of this time frame. This technique does not appear on Iroquoian ceramic assemblages (Figure 5, 7, 8).

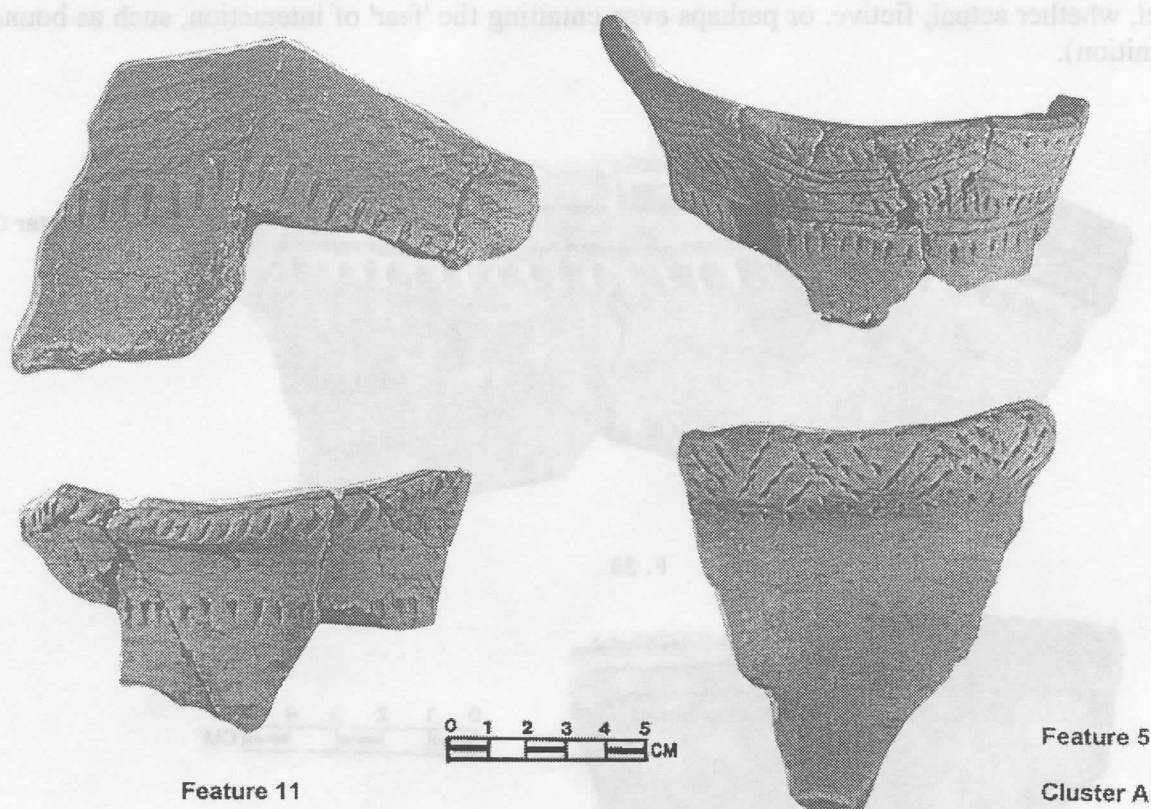


Figure 7: Springwells Rimsherds, Features 5 and 11, Cluster A.

Further, there is evidence of both a juxtaposition of distinct ceramic styles (rimsherds characteristic of Springwells and MOI groups respectively) within the same feature context (Features 39, 31, 90, 29), as well as a combination or blending of these traits on the same vessel(s) (Feature 29, 90). In Features 31 and 39, these contrasting rimsherds were found side by side, with little other ceramic contents (Figure 5, 9, 10). Additionally, there are distinctive styles of awls (e.g. Figure 11 bottom), which are found in the different occupations, one of which is characteristic of a weaving technology (Torrence 1989:30). These are also juxtaposed in one of the features (again, Feature 39), and the central apex north end wall support post mentioned earlier where they co-occur with a bone sucking tube.

There are few definite ceramic mends from the Haagsma Site, i.e., only two actual mends; one in the Initial Late Woodland component, and one in the Springwells component. However, there are a number of inferred or likely mends as illustrated in Figures 5 and 12, including a distinctive slip-roughened treatment in the Springwells Feature 5 and the MOI Feature 34. As noted, the "Macomb Linear" woven fiber technique, as a rimsherd design, is the primary distinguishing characteristic of



Figure 8: Springwells Phase Rimsherds, Feature 3, Cluster A.

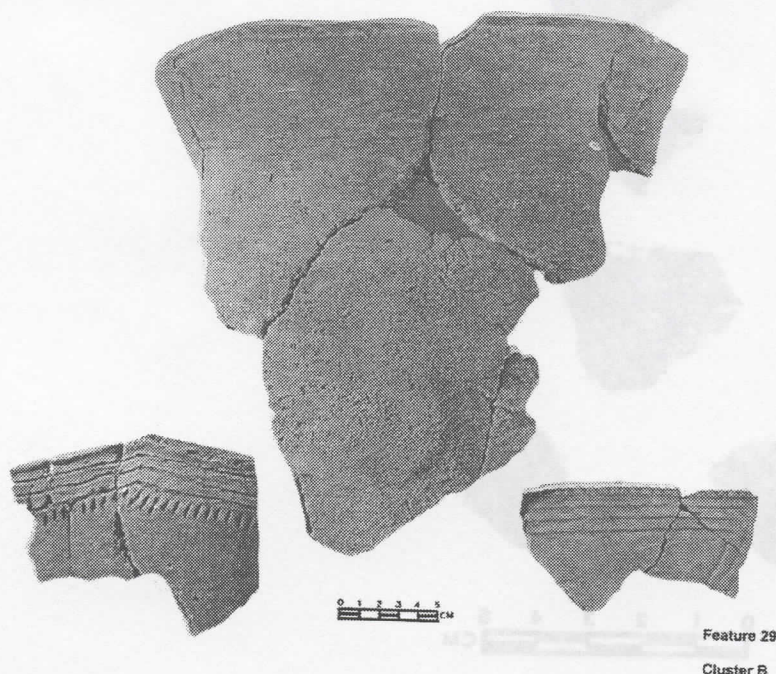


Figure 9: Rimsherds, Cluster B, Feature 29.

the Springwells occupation at Haagsma, which employ this technique almost exclusively. The cluster of features containing these ceramics border the south wall of posts and the exterior hearth (Cluster A). We can examine the frequency of this technique at Haagsma as compared with other Springwells sites further west. There is an increase in this technique on Springwells sites the further west one proceeds, and we can see that the frequency of the Macomb Linear woven fiber technique at Haagsma is similar to that of sites in Michigan (Figure 13). That is, the assemblage is distinct at Haagsma compared with other designated Springwells sites documented in Ontario in that most of the rimsherds are of the Macomb Linear woven fiber technique. I suggest that it is no coincidence that this technique, reminiscent of a basketry design, is employed on ceramic vessels that tend to be bag-shaped; the vessels were constructed to appear as baskets, reflecting a strong weaving technology and ideology (this technology is carried through to the post-contact period where we find the basketry and reed mat dwellings in the Michigan regions). I also believe that contact between the Springwells and MOI is the reason that the three distinctive awls (one of these a "mat needle": Torrence 1989:178-9)

were juxtaposed together within a post mold of primary importance to the structure (especially Cluster "B" and the extension, Cluster "C") (Figure 11).

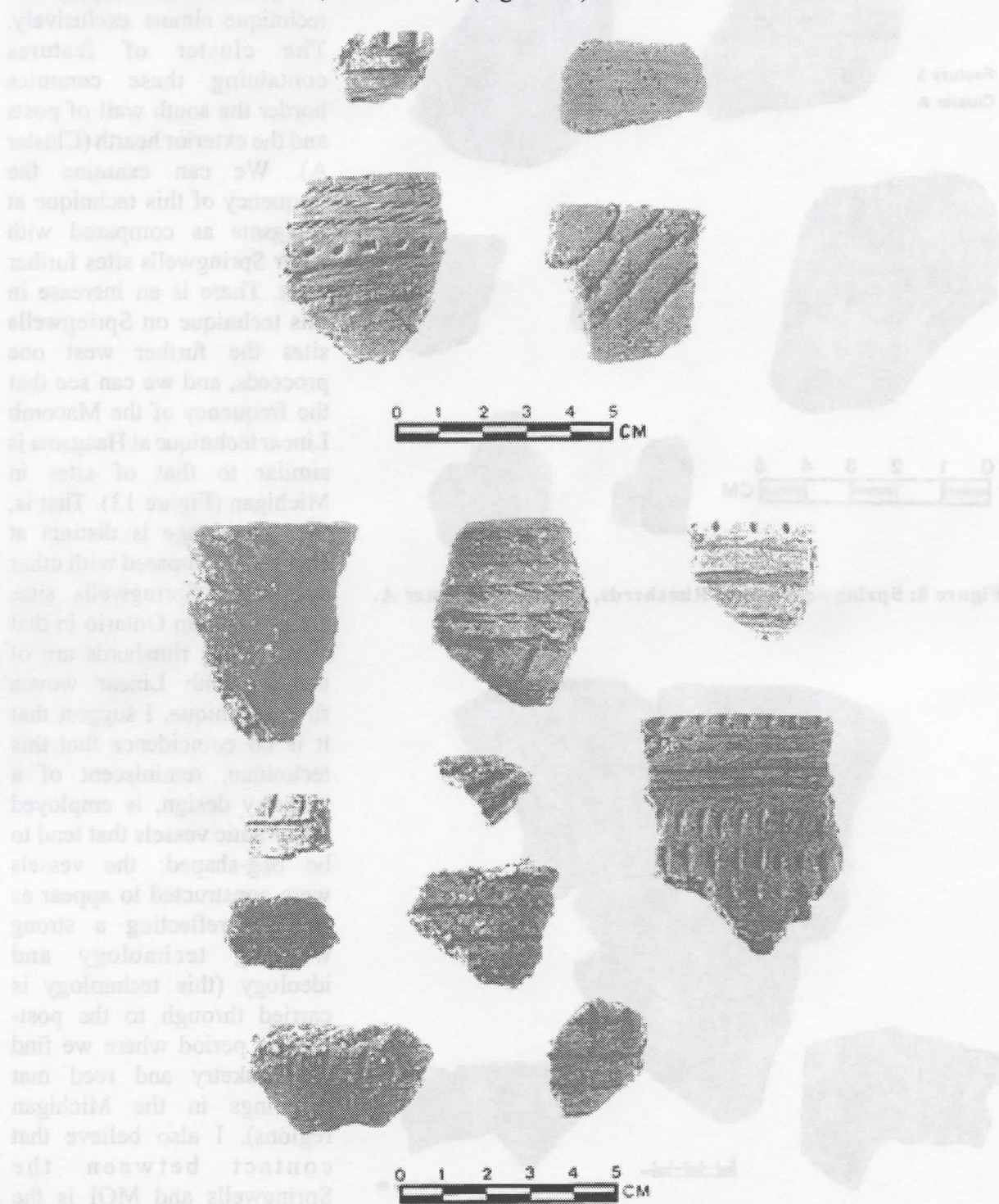
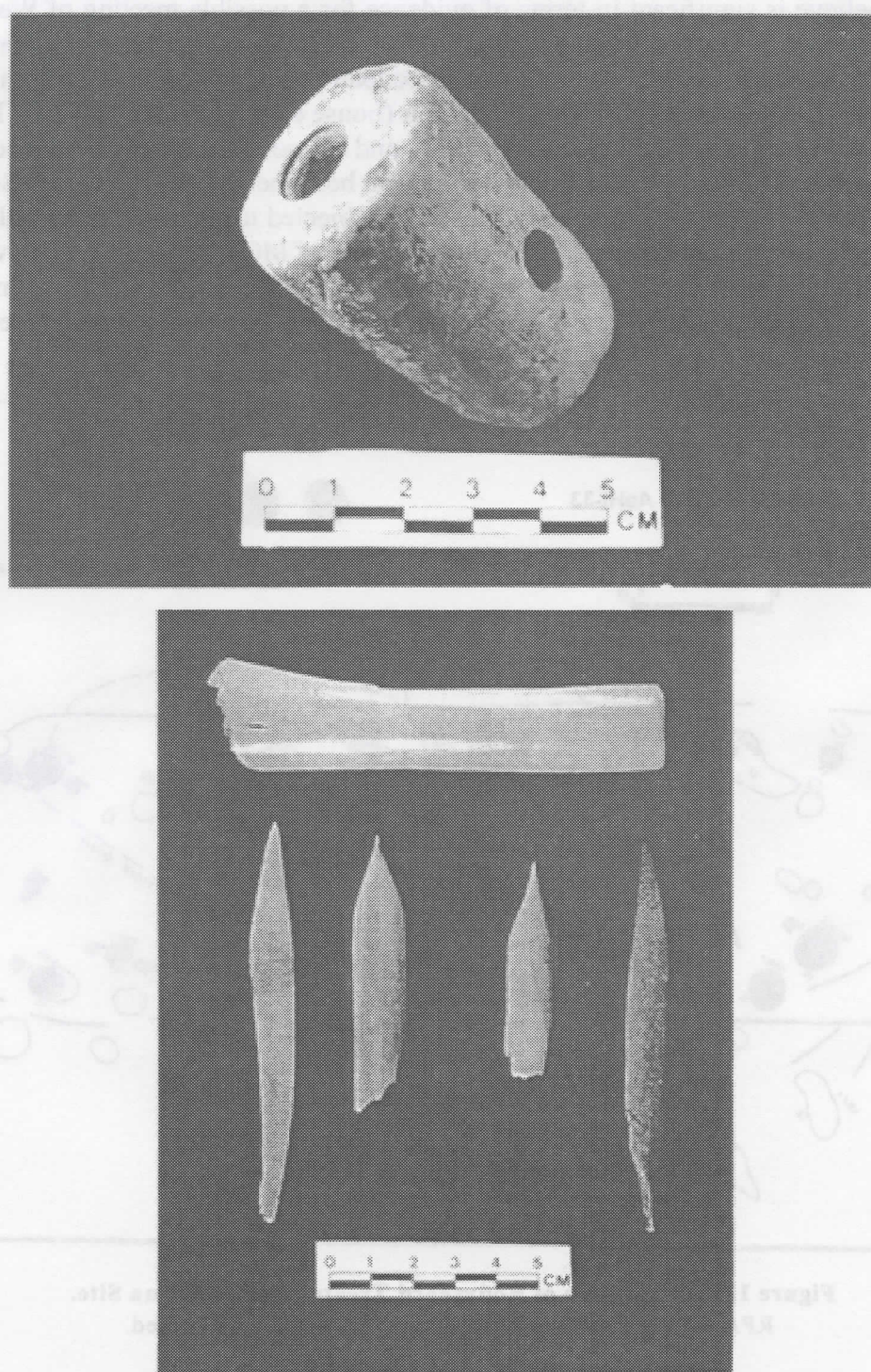


Figure 10: Feature 39 (Top view left), Feature 59 (Top view right) and Feature 90 (Midden; bottom view) Rimsherds.



**Figure 11: Limestone Pipe Bowl, Feature #11 (upper photo),
Bone Sucking Tube (lower photo, top row) and
Bone Awls (lower photo, bottom row), Haagsma Site.**

What I also believe is significant in terms of evidence for a possible meeting of Western Basin Springwells and Middle Ontario Iroquoian groups is the frequency of the "slip-roughened" surface treatment on the ceramics in the Cluster "B" MOI occupation, and the persistence of this treatment on the ceramics of the Cluster "C" MOI occupation (house expansion) (Figure 12). This surface treatment is a characteristic of Springwells ceramics, and has not been found on MOI ceramics east of this region, while it has only been apparent on several bodysherds from the Himey Site (keeping in mind that both Himey and the Cemetery Site were subjected to test-excavation only). The rib-paddled surface treatment on the other hand (characteristic of MOI ceramics) was prevalent in the Cluster "A" Springwells occupation (along with plain and slip-roughened treatments). In the Cluster "C" house expansion meanwhile, we can see a roughly even split in the treatment types.

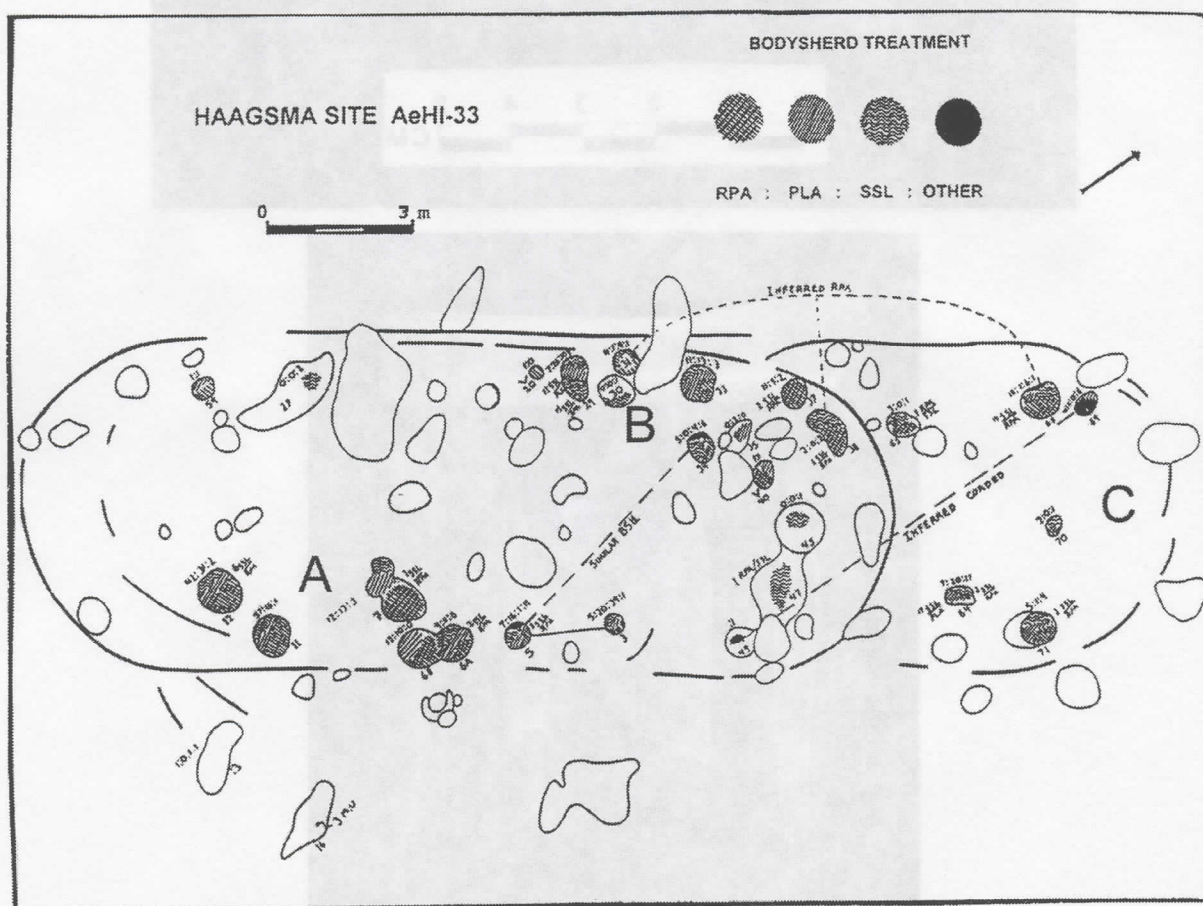


Figure 12: Distribution of Bodysherd Treatments, Haagsma Site.

RPA = ribbed paddle; PLA = plain; SSL = slip-roughened.

A comparison of bodysherd treatments from Springwells designated sites located west of Haagsma reveals that the slip-roughened treatment increases progressively westward, while the rib-paddled treatment decreases respectively. Interestingly, rib-paddling (as opposed to cord roughening) is a common treatment on the ceramics of the Initial Late Woodland component at Haagsma (these ceramics are associated with the three separate ILW dates). While the presence of the rib-paddled

sherds in the Springwells component may be attributed to primarily one vessel, it would be informative to conduct a trace element analysis on the ceramics to determine if the vessels were made on site or transported there.

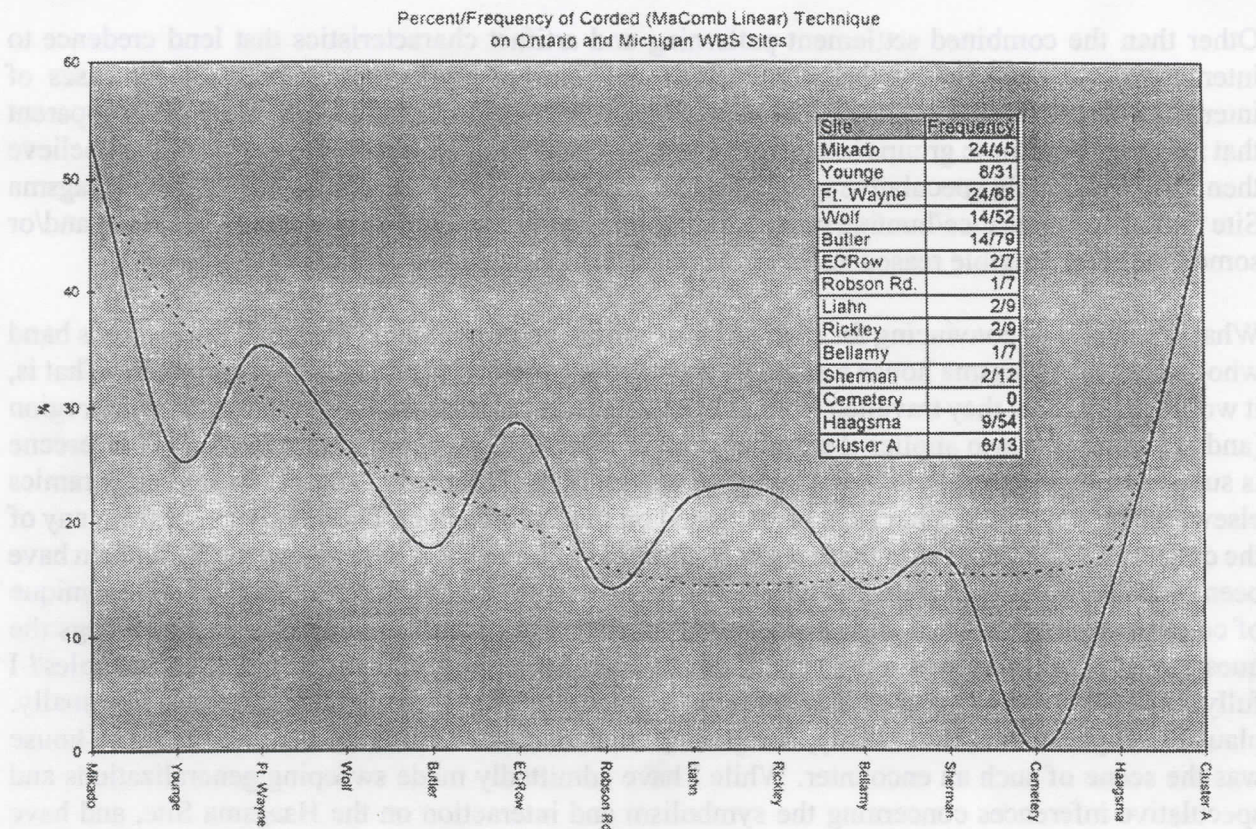


Figure 13: Frequency of Corded (MacComb Linear) Technique on Ontario and Michigan Western Basin Sites. Sites are arranged roughly from west (left) to east (right).

Therefore, I believe that the Haagsma Site (in light of the lack of ceramic mends and a low vessel count, (i.e., Springwells=12, MOI-Cluster B=12, MOI-Cluster C=6) presents a case for examining aspects of ceramic manufacture (such as bodysherd treatment) that a specific analysis of rimsherds would not be able to address. For if we are to gain some understanding of the less obvious features, or those that may be as 'sensitive' (or more so, for that matter) to the producers of the vessels as the obvious ceramic rim designs, then we need to incorporate the whole vessel into our analysis (and we are reminded by Sterner [1989] of the importance of pot morphology and utilization in equating with ethnicity). To that end, I have incorporated this specific analysis of bodysherd treatments into the overall scheme of things. This analysis revealed continuity in methods of rib-paddling and slip-roughening from the Springwells occupation to the MOI occupation(s) (Clusters B and C), with several variations observed in terms of types of rib-paddling and slip-roughening. While the rimsherd analysis revealed a high degree of distinction between the Springwells and MOI occupations, only in the Cluster B- MOI group do we see this extreme variability and overlap of characteristics within the occupations themselves. This cluster is also where the greatest variability

in terms of combinations of bodysherd treatments were present (i.e., slip-roughened, rib-paddled, and plain combinations). Thus, the bodysherd analysis has added to the rimsherd analysis in providing insights as to the continuity between the occupations, i.e., a case for a meeting between these groups.

Other than the combined settlement patterning and artifact characteristics that lend credence to interaction, we can't ignore the ethnohistoric and current ethnographic evidence for cases of interaction between ethnic groups. These peoples do not exist in isolation, and it is readily apparent that neighboring ethnic groups interact on a regular basis for a multitude of reasons. I don't believe then, that it is unduly speculative to suggest that some form of interaction occurred at the Haagsma Site (whether sustenance/hunting related, actual integration, as in an intermarriage situation, and/or some other less tangible reason such as cosmological knowledge by religious specialists).

What is perhaps as convincing for a case of interaction, however, is that the small Springwells band who visited the Haagsma house seemingly travelled a considerable distance to reach there. That is, it would appear that they travelled from at least as far westward as the Dresden/Wallaceburg region (and the same scenario applies if a drainage other than the Sydenham were taken). This inference is supported by the paucity of the distinctive woven fibre ("Macomb Linear") impressed ceramics elsewhere on any of the other sites investigated on the Sydenham or Thames rivers, or from any of the collections documented in these regions (the areas of potential settlement on the Sydenham have been revisited/investigated several times). But it is also supported by the frequency of this technique of ceramic decoration from sites investigated in Michigan (as discussed). This evidence begs the question of why travel such a distance if not to make some form of contact with other peoples? I fully realize that actual proof of interaction is impossible; what I am aiming for here is, minimally, plausible explanations, and ideally, compelling, not conclusive evidence that the Haagsma house was the scene of such an encounter. While I have admittedly made sweeping generalizations and speculative inferences concerning the symbolism and interaction on the Haagsma Site, and have been justly criticized for this, I maintain that much of this symbolism and interaction (to be specific, the symbolism OF interaction) was a plausible scenario (Riddell 2000). Again, this is based on the particular nature of this site/region, and the ethnic movements and transformations that are proposed to have transpired during this period (to be discussed).

In summary then, I suggest that there was a meeting of the Springwells group on the east side of the house (Cluster A) with the MOI group on the other side of the house (Cluster B). This merger may have simply entailed a sharing of resources and skills (e.g., pottery manufacturing, as suggested by the ceramics in the Cluster B features), or an actual integration of individuals. This may have occurred at a later time than an initial visit of the Springwells group during a period of abandonment of the house. I propose that the Cluster B group then occupied the extension of the house (Cluster C), and may have eventually played a role in the initiation of the later community situated where the adjacent sand pit is now located.

Finally, I will briefly touch on the faunal and floral resources present at Haagsma. In addition to the distinct ceramic styles represented in the Springwells occupation in particular, a distinction is also present in terms of faunal material utilized in this component. Here we find that, unlike the MOI occupation, select elements of bear and turkey are present (Features 3 and 5; Figure 14). Feature

11 in itself would appear to have been the end result of a "feast/offering" with, in addition to the mass of crushed deer bone, elements of dog and turkey present, as well as a small ceramic vessel, fragments of miniature vessels, and perhaps most telling, an unused limestone pipe bowl, roughly finished of the "Calumet" style, noted as a pipe used in meeting contexts (Walthall and Emerson 1992:77) (Figure 11, upper).

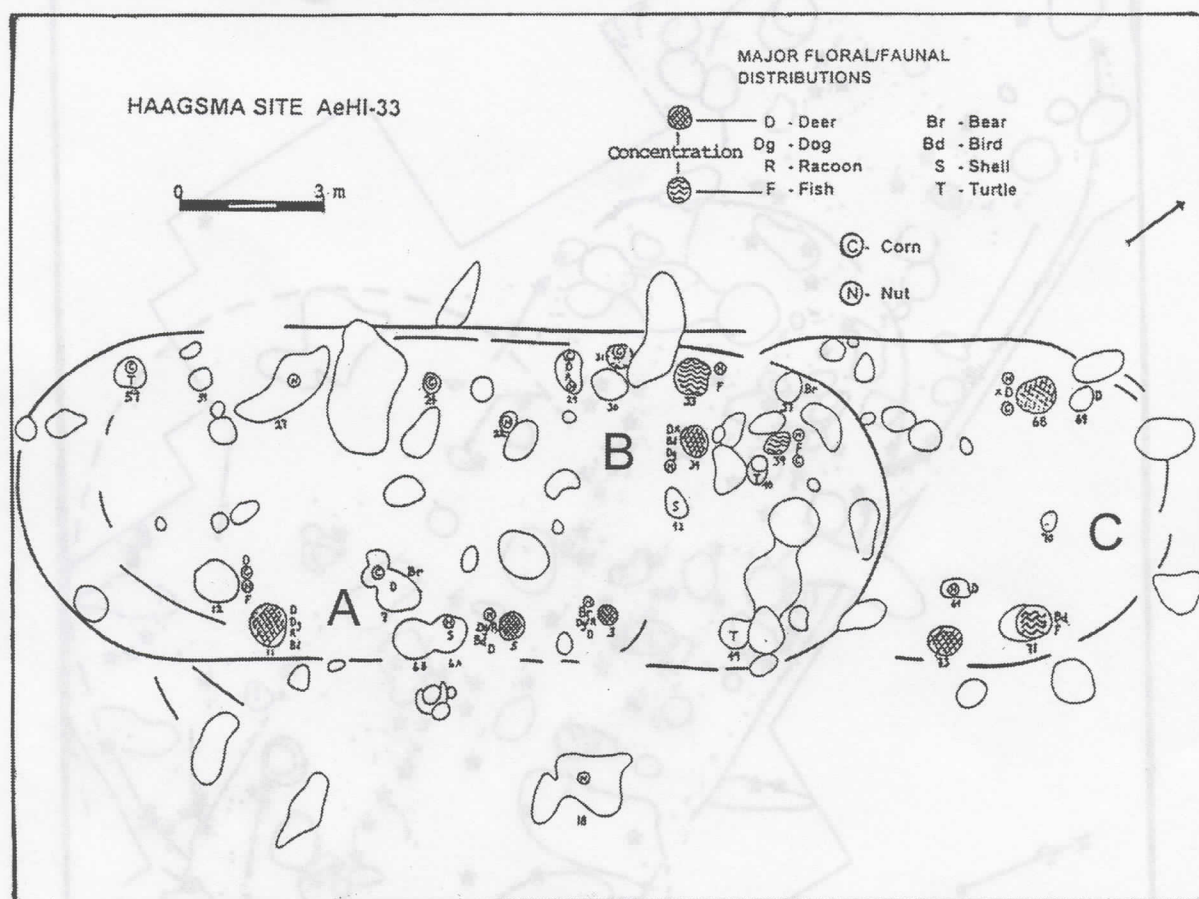


Figure 14: Distribution of Floral and Faunal Remains by Feature, Haagsma Site House.

What is perhaps most striking about the faunal resources utilized on behalf of the MOI contingent is the similarity of the contents and treatment of these between two features (#34 and #68; Figure 14). Feature 34 was designated a primarily Initial Late Woodland feature (from a radiocarbon date in the lower level), albeit with characteristic MOI ceramics in the uppermost layer, while Feature 68 is situated in the house extension, and contained ceramics of later MOI affiliation. Both these features contained paired male deer crania, minus the antlers, in the base of the pits, in addition to substantial remains of these individuals. This specific 'interment' disposal practice suggests continuity between the Initial Late Woodland and MOI groups at Haagsma. It should also be mentioned that there are no apparent Western Basin (i.e., "Younge Phase") ceramics (a supposed defining characteristic is that of zoned incising) in the Initial Late Woodland component at Haagsma.

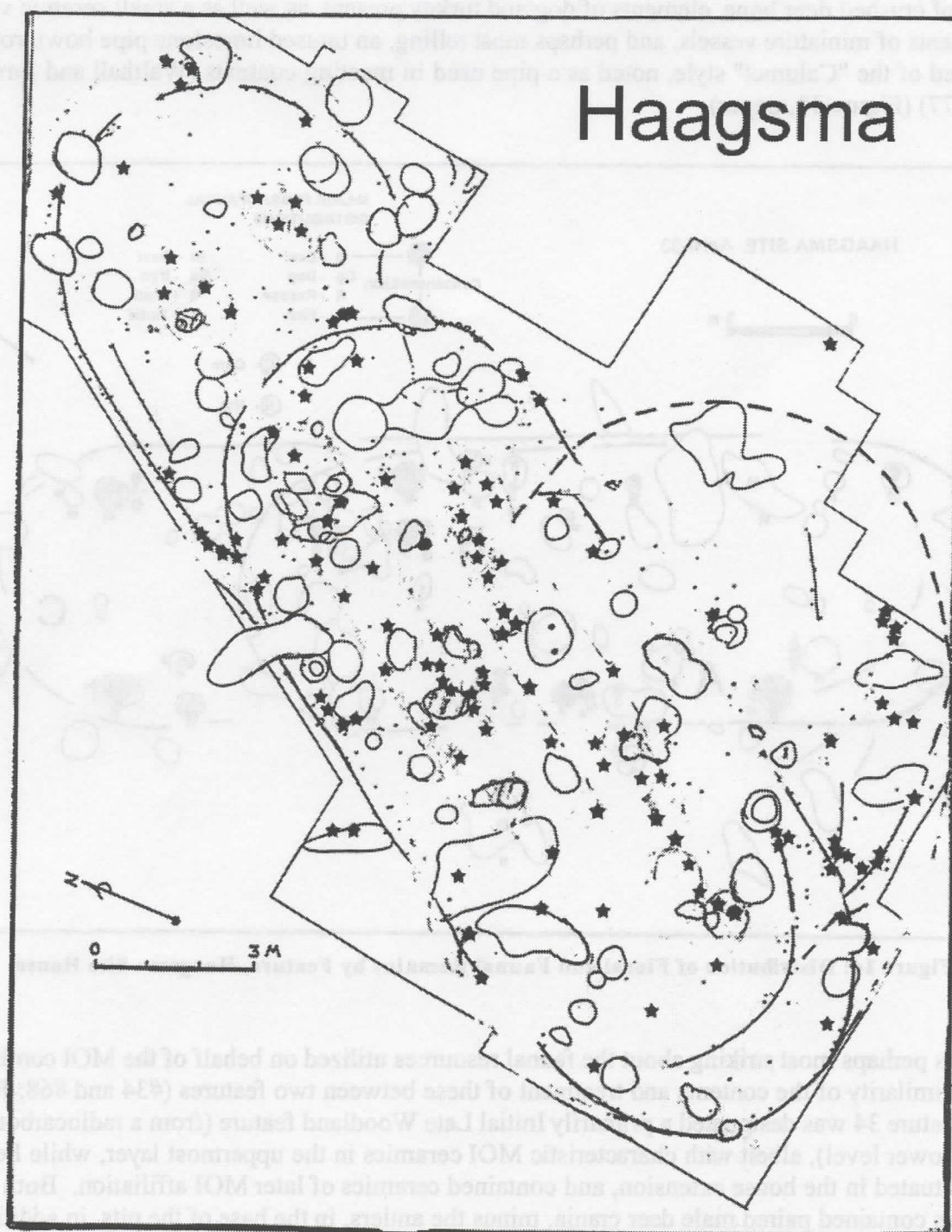


Figure 15: Location of Large Posts (>10 cm diameter; starred) and Possible Western Basin Household on East Side of House (outlined by oval dashed line).

Floral resources were represented primarily in the midden features to the north of the house, in particular, Feature 90. This shallow deposit contained much of the charred corn and nut remains, as well as raspberry seeds (This is also another feature that contained 'hybrid' ceramics of a somewhat later vein, i.e., post 1400 A.D., as well as those characteristic of both Springwells and MOI affinities; e.g. Figure 10, lower).

In summary, the Springwells and MOI occupations at the Haagsma Site appear to have entailed differing modes of subsistence and settlement, while nevertheless sharing the same structure. It is doubtful that the house was occupied year-round (the lack of an interior hearth an obvious indication here), although it appears that it was utilized at least into the late fall by the Initial Late Woodland and MOI groups (when the deer represented in Features 34 and 68 were taken). Fish (sucker and catfish) remains were also abundant in two of the MOI features indicating spring habitation. The length of occupation by the Springwells group on the other hand was likely of shorter duration (perhaps consisting of two visitations- one at a later date, as suggested by the later ceramics in the middens) yet I propose that this was significant enough to entail the proposed encounter. If interaction did take place, whether this involved an actual integration of Springwells individuals into the MOI ranks is another issue, although the persistence of characteristic Springwells traits in the house extension would seem to support such a scenario (rather than simply a 'mimicing' influence, for example). Furthermore, we are made aware, in the case of Huron captives of the Mohawk, of the persistence of the former in continuing their traditional ceramic techniques (perhaps in part in defiance) (Kuhn, 1983). In a situation of co-operative contact, as I propose at Haagsma, aspects of those ceramic traditions on either side are likely to persist as well, whether obvious or not.

The sharing of the structure was also significant enough to warrant what I propose to be a reorientation of the longhouse to suit the Springwells household (Figure 15). This appears to have entailed an orientation in alignment with the hearth and large opening on the east side of the structure, which encompasses a proposed sweat feature, a gap in the support post line, and a corresponding opening to the west. We can also visualize a fairly effective 'blocking' provided by the support posts between the Springwells and MOI occupations (with MOI ceramics present within several of these posts, as well as the bone tube). An offshoot wall of post molds running in an easterly direction from the south end of the house may have been part of the overall Springwells household, which I contend was oriented opposite to that of the longhouse proper, i.e., in a east/west direction (in alignment with the semi-circular hearth and several exterior features). This would essentially entail the occupation of house within a house, with an exterior cooking area. These characteristics would resemble an historical equivalent of the summer dwellings of certain First Nations groups who resided in the Michigan region.

A feature in the MOI occupation meanwhile may have entailed a 'sweating' function, created an opening in an otherwise 'fortified' (double) west wall. The elongate composite feature mass in the northend of the initial structure resembles a sheet midden, with pockets of fire-reddened soil and scattered debris. Judging from similar distinctive rib-paddled ceramics found here and in the house extension, it appears to have been used by that later group. I suggest that this group, the last to occupy the Haagsma house, occupied that (extended) section of the structure only, and may have abandoned the house to move to the nearby site that has been destroyed by quarrying operations (noteworthy is a later Late Woodland, i.e., "Lawson Incised" rimsherd from a feature in the

extension) (Figure 10, 16). Also noteworthy is the 'porous' nature of this end of the house, with four large, shallow features with little contents situated within the openings. In either case as noted, the "groups" that inhabited the Haagsma dwelling were small, numbering as few as perhaps several individuals each.

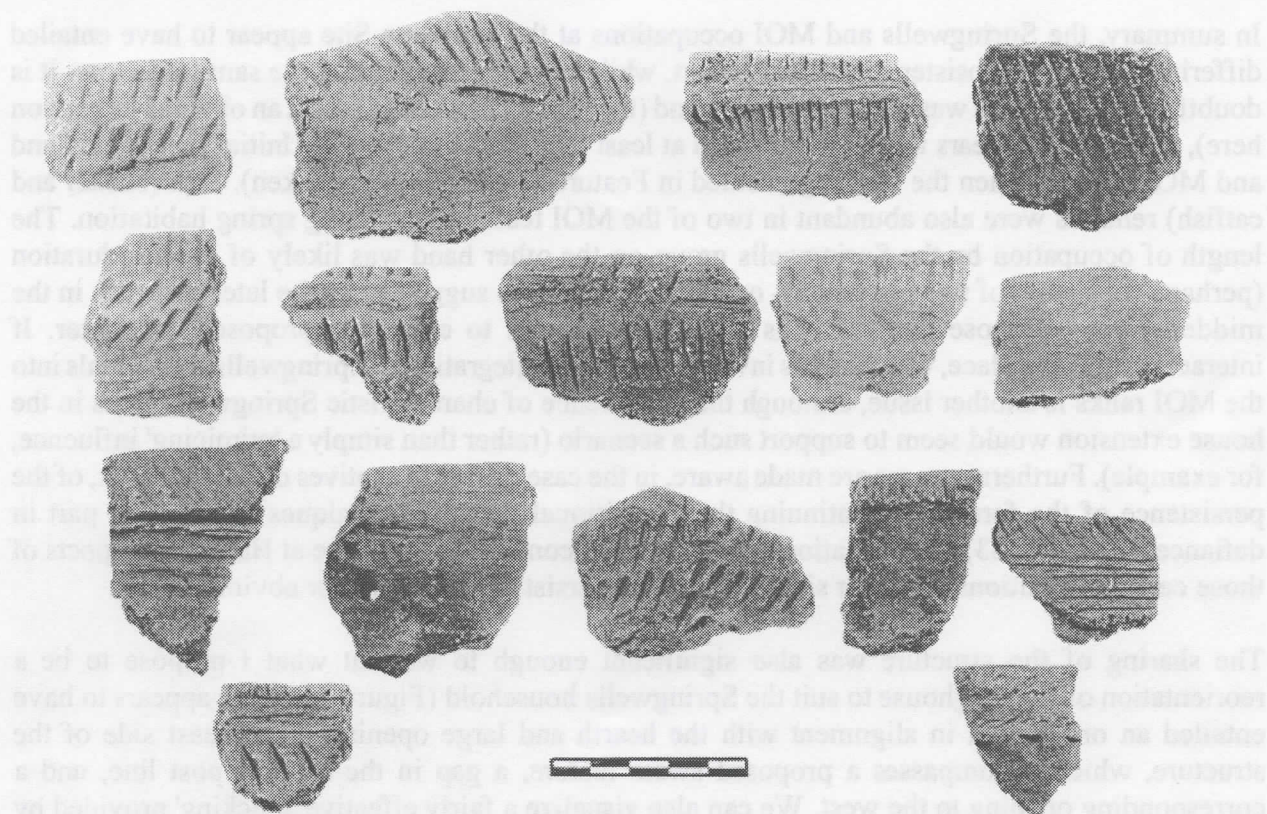


Figure 16: Late Woodland Rimsherds, Haagsma Gravel Pit. Courtesy of Leroy Weed.

Evidence from Neighboring Settlements

I will discuss the other two sites (Cemetery and Himey) briefly. Both these sites are located downstream from Haagsma; the Cemetery Site at two kilometres, and the Himey Site at four kilometres (Figure 2). Both were test-excavated, uncovering comparable surface areas of approximately ten square metres each. The Cemetery Site is situated where the modern day Alvinston cemetery now stands. The bulk of the settlement has been impacted by the modern grave shafts, and the cemetery caretaker has substantial collections from the site. I was fortunate enough to gain access to a small portion of the site that had been 'unplotted' for interments. These excavations uncovered evidence of a single-row palisade and several interior features, but no house walls were discerned (Figures 17 & 18).

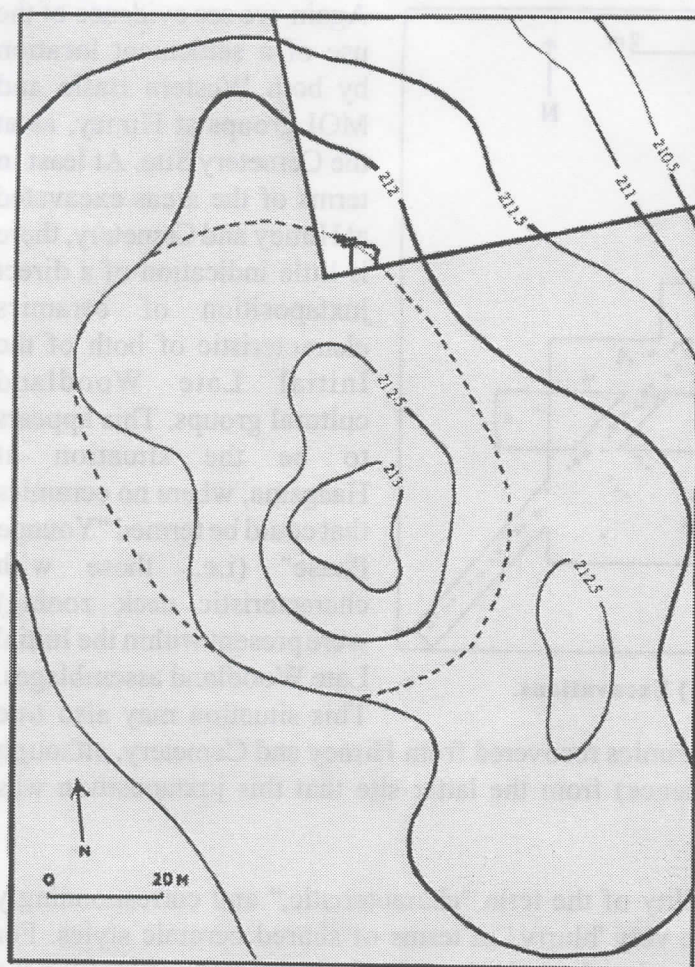


Figure 17: Cemetery Site (AeHI-31) Topographic Map.

Shaded area is modern cemetery and excavated area is shown at top in corner of adjacent property.

Based on the palisade alignment, the topography, and the location of materials recovered from the grave shafts by the caretaker, the Cemetery Site could have been an approximately one to two hectare settlement. Several features were defined; one of which yielded a radiocarbon date (580 \pm 120 B.P.) from a small amount of wood charcoal, and in association with two finely cord-marked bodysherds, which is comparable with the Haagsma Site Springwells and MOI dates. Cultural material (including "diagnostics") recovered from the other features was sparse, however, topsoil screening recovered several rimsherds that point to a "Late Glen Meyer/ Uren" affiliation. At least one of these rims however is also characteristic of a "Springwells Net" design, and two "Mixer Dentate"- like rimsherds were recovered from a nearby graveshaft by the caretaker. There are similarities of the Springwells net and the push-pull tool impressed rims from Cemetery with those of the Liahn Site near Lake St. Clair (Kenyon 1981). Additionally, other ceramics recovered by the caretaker from grave shafts further to the west, but still within the projected palisade, are characteristic of a Western Basin Young Phase affiliation. Thus,

there appears to have been repeated use of this site by both Western Basin Young/Springwells groups, and Glen Meyer/ Middle Ontario Iroquoian peoples.

The Himey Site meanwhile is represented by a portion of a longhouse and several controlled surface pickups, indicating a settlement of perhaps similar proportions (although likely smaller) to that of the Cemetery Site. Unfortunately this site was subjected to aggregate removal some decades ago, therefore excavations centred on an area where disturbance was minimal. Aside from the relatively widely-spaced wall posts, several features were excavated. One of these in particular yielded much of the cultural material (Figure 19). Ceramics recovered from this feature (#1) indicate a predominantly Western Basin Young Phase affiliation, although a Middle Ontario Iroquoian like rimsherd and a necksherd with indications of slip-roughening were recovered from topsoil screening above this feature, and other ceramics characteristic of this affiliation were obtained from the surface collection (One of these rimsherds bears a close resemblance to a rimsherd from Feature 90 of the Haagsma Site).

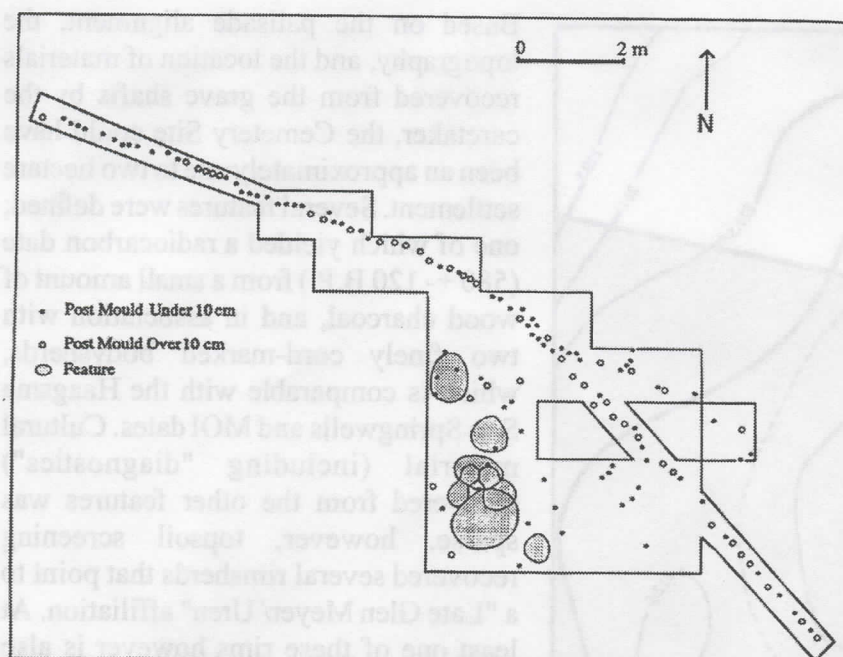


Figure 18: Cemetery Site (AeH1-31) Excavations.

for the later "mid-range" Late Woodland ceramics recovered from Himey and Cemetery, although there are indications (from topsoil provenience) from the latter site that this juxtaposition was occurring at this time.

One must be careful, however, with the utility of the term "characteristic," and correspondingly assigning definitions to an area that can be very 'blurry,' in terms of shared ceramic styles. For example, the initial surface investigations that I undertook along the Sydenham River entailed the documentation of a number of settlements that others believed were of Young Phase affiliation, relying on solely the rimsherd characteristics. I subsequently revised these site designations to a general "Initial Late Woodland" classification, due to the interchangeability of these ceramic rimsherd designs between the cultures as defined. The ceramic designations however become comparatively easier in the "mid-range" Late Woodland period (particularly between those Springwells "Macomb Linear" corded rimsherds and the MOI ceramic types; i.e., the MOI don't use the woven fiber technique), and it most certainly is easier in the terminal Late Woodland (i.e., Wolfe Phase vs Neutral). Nonetheless, distinguishing ceramic characteristics are present in the earlier period, but we generally need more of the vessel to make such an assessment.

Whether these distinguishing traits are indicative of ethnic affiliation is of course a contentious issue (and we are cautioned by Hodder [1985, 1989], Barth [1994, 2000] and company concerning the cross-cutting nature of ethnic groups and material culture), but I believe that the Haagsma Site has given us a 'window' into the socially differentiated, if not ethnically different groups who shared this structure for a short period during the fourteenth century. This window has been facilitated by a wider spectrum of evidence than strictly ceramic (or even types of ceramic) analysis would offer (i.e., distinguishing settlement and subsistence features, and comparative samples from adjacent sites).

Again, we see evidence of the use of a settlement location by both Western Basin and MOI groups at Himey, as at the Cemetery Site. At least in terms of the areas excavated at Himey and Cemetery, there is little indication of a direct juxtaposition of ceramics characteristic of both of the Initial Late Woodland cultural groups. This appears to be the situation at Haagsma, where no ceramics that could be termed "Young Phase" (i.e., those with characteristic neck zoning) were present within the Initial Late Woodland assemblages.

This situation may also true

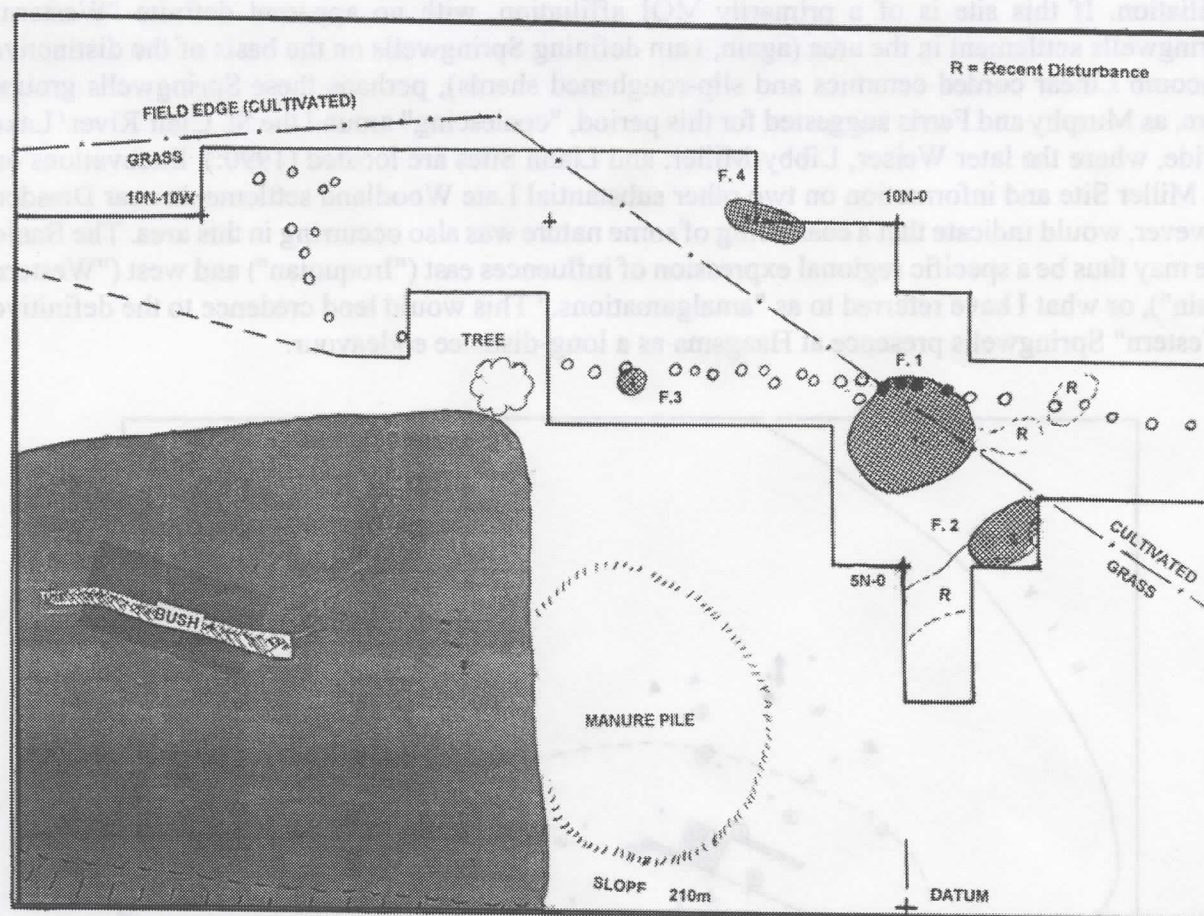


Figure 19: Himey Site (AeHI-14), 1994 Excavations.

One other site that was test-excavated, located roughly halfway between Alvinston and Dresden, and situated on a sandy ridge adjacent to the river and a small feeder creek, deserves mention (the Banjo Site: AeHI-39). From the excavations, this would appear to be a small Late Woodland encampment. The artifacts retrieved and settlement defined was extremely limited, with several shallow features of indeterminate affiliation and several scattered post molds. The "diagnostic" ceramics consisted of one surface-collected rimsherd that appears to be of MOI affiliation (plain horizontals), four fragmentary rimsherds (all with plain horizontals combined with obliques), several necksherds and fragmentary necksherds (most with plain linear impressions, but also one with a cord-twist linear marking), and a number of bodysherd fragments, most of which are rib-paddled or plain, but also two slip-roughened sherds) (Figure 20).

A possibly related, similarly small settlement is located several hundred metres up the feeder creek, again on a sandy ridge. This site is, at least in part, a burial ground (from fragmentary pieces of human bone in the cultivated field, and the landowner's collections). Fortunately, much of the site/burial is in a grassy undisturbed area adjacent to the creek. Unfortunately, little diagnostic material was apparent, aside from several plain necksherds that again point to a later Late Woodland

affiliation. If this site is of a primarily MOI affiliation, with no apparent definite "Western" Springwells settlement in the area (again, I am defining Springwells on the basis of the distinctive Macomb Linear corded ceramics and slip-roughened sherds), perhaps these Springwells groups were, as Murphy and Ferris suggested for this period, "coalescing" around the St. Clair River/ Lake divide, where the later Weiser, Libby-Miller, and Liahn Sites are located (1990:). Excavations on the Miller Site and information on two other substantial Late Woodland settlements near Dresden however, would indicate that a coalescing of some nature was also occurring in this area. The Banjo Site may thus be a specific regional expression of influences east ("Iroquoian") and west ("Western Basin"), or what I have referred to as "amalgamations." This would lend credence to the definitive "Western" Springwells presence at Haagsma as a long-distance endeavour.

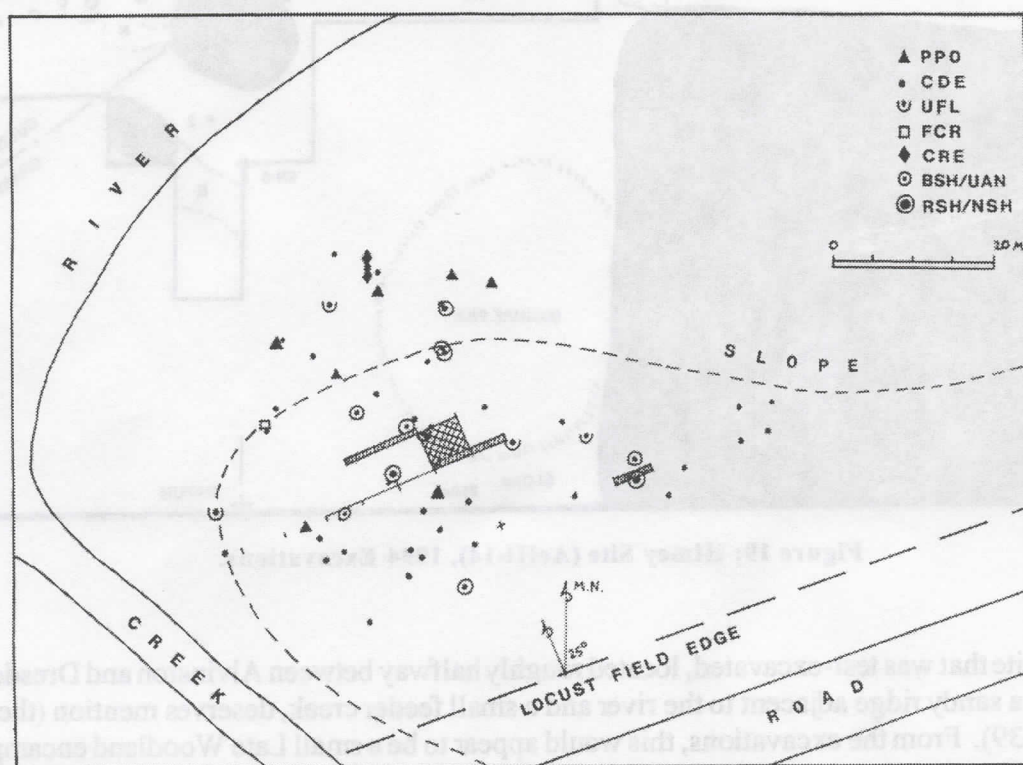


Figure 20: Banjo Site (AeH1-39), Location of Excavations and Surface Finds.

Located several kilometers downstream from these two settlements is the Bellamy Site, a Chippewa encampment and designated Springwells component (Murphy, 1987). Again, the latter occupation appears to have consisted of a small group of individuals and a seasonal situation, with few ceramics displaying what I have designated as "characteristic" features found in frequency on sites in Michigan; i.e., the Macomb linear woven fibre impressions, and the slip-roughened surface treatments. The nature of the settlement and physiographic location of Bellamy is comparable to the Banjo Site, and it seems apparent that this is primarily the type of occupation that these mid-range Late Woodland groups practiced along this, the mid to lower stretch of the Sydenham River.

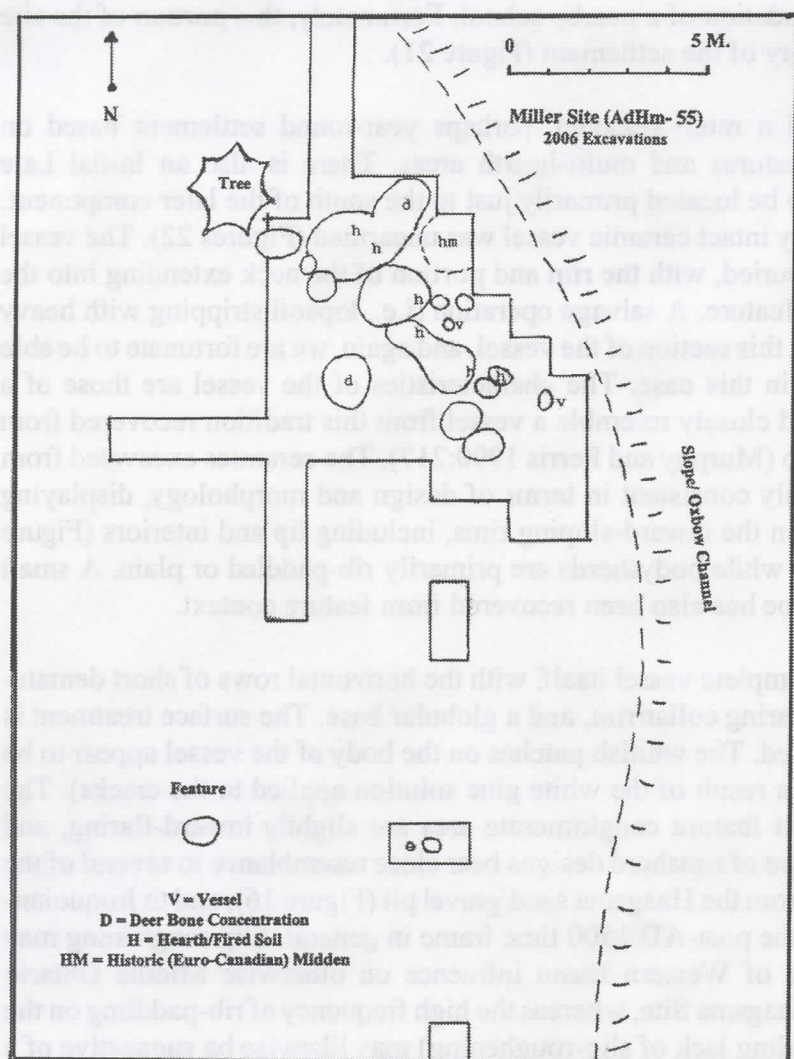


Figure 21: Miller Site (AdHm-55), 2006 Excavations.

settlement), and with both floodplain terrace and sand knoll sites represented. The ceramic samples (again, the sites were revisited several times) from these settlements meanwhile, are somewhat more variable in terms of decoration. The next step obviously, would be to conduct test excavations on a number of these sites in order to determine whether this variability and homogeneity are also reflected in the sub-surface settlement patterns. If such is the case, perhaps we are dealing with a specific regional development of settlement in Alvinston area in particular.

Lastly, I will summarize the ongoing excavations at the Miller Site (AdHm-55). This settlement is located several kilometers east of Dresden, on a sandy ridge bordering an oxbow channel and junction of the river (Figure 1). It is particularly fortunate that this site is available for research, not only through the grace of the landowner, but also because most of these sand knolls in this region were leveled several decades ago. We thus have one of the few, if not the only remaining Late Woodland "Western Basin Springwells" substantial settlements at our disposal. "Disposal" is perhaps an appropriate term as a portion of this site was apparently "removed" sometime in the

In this vein, I have also documented Initial Late Woodland settlement along the Sydenham River (repeated surface collections, including the Initial Late Woodland components on the Haagsma, Cemetery and Himey Sites). Near the beginning of the article, I mentioned that there was a clustering of the mid-range sites in the Alvinston area. This clustering also appears to be true for the earlier Late Woodland settlements, with the majority of these sites located on floodplain terraces (Figure 1). These smaller settlements are clearly the most numerous of all sites located along the Sydenham drainage, with an obvious concentration into more substantial but dispersed sites occurring in the later time frame in question. The ceramics, and indeed, the total artifact samples from these small settlements are comparatively homogeneous. The Initial Late Woodland settlement documented downstream from this area appears to be somewhat more dispersed (although less so than the mid-range Late Woodland

1970's for the construction of a foundation of a nearby school. Fortunately, this portion of the site appears to have been on the periphery of the settlement (Figure 21).

Excavations to date have revealed a multi-seasonal, perhaps year-round settlement based on numerous deeply layered refuse features and multi-hearth areas. There is also an Initial Late Woodland component that seems to be located primarily just to the south of the later component. Within the later component, a largely intact ceramic vessel was unearthed (Figures 22). The vessel appears to have been intentionally buried, with the rim and portion of the neck extending into the topsoil. It is not contained within a feature. A salvage operation (i.e., topsoil stripping with heavy machinery) may well have destroyed this section of the vessel, and again, we are fortunate to be able to take the time and care required in this case. The characteristics of the vessel are those of a Springwells "Mixer" affiliation, and closely resemble a vessel from this tradition recovered from the Libben Site in northwestern Ohio (Murphy and Ferris 1990:217). The ceramics excavated from this multi-feature area are remarkably consistent in terms of design and morphology, displaying bands of short impressed obliques on the inward-sloping rims, including lip and interiors (Figure 23). Necksherds are plain or wiped, while bodysherds are primarily rib-paddled or plain. A small complete, plain ceramic smoking pipe has also been recovered from feature context.

The "anomaly" at this point is the complete vessel itself, with the horizontal rows of short dentate-like impressions, an extremely outflaring collar/rim, and a globular base. The surface treatment is smoothed rib-paddled and plain/wiped. The whitish patches on the body of the vessel appear to be part of the treatment itself (i.e., not a result of the white glue solution applied to the cracks). The other rim sections from the adjacent feature conglomerate area are slightly inward-flaring, and generally from larger vessels. The type of rimsherd designs bear close resemblance to several of the later Iroquoian ceramics recovered from the Haagsma sand/gravel pit (Figure 16), and to Iroquoian-designated ceramic assemblages of the post-AD 1500 time frame in general. Slip roughening may be an indication of the persistence of Western Basin influence on otherwise Middle Ontario Iroquoian-looking ceramics at the Haagsma Site, whereas the high frequency of rib-paddling on the Miller Site ceramics (and corresponding lack of slip-roughening) may likewise be suggestive of a specific regional (or site-specific) cultural development. The Late Iroquoian (eastward)- looking rimsherds prominent at the Miller Site may likewise be indicative of a 'push' westward during this time frame.

Substantial faunal remains have been collected from the deep refuse features, including primarily deer from two deeply buried features (represented by a wide range of the carcass - apparently a butchering site). Fish, bird and small mammal are also present. No cultigens or other floral subsistence have been recovered to date from the site. While the excavations have been confined to one apparent structure at present, future excavations will hopefully determine the full extent of the site. No discernable post molds have been discovered at this time, possibly due to the very porous soil conditions. The alignment of the hearth/fired soil areas however suggests a northwest/southeast orientation of a dwelling.

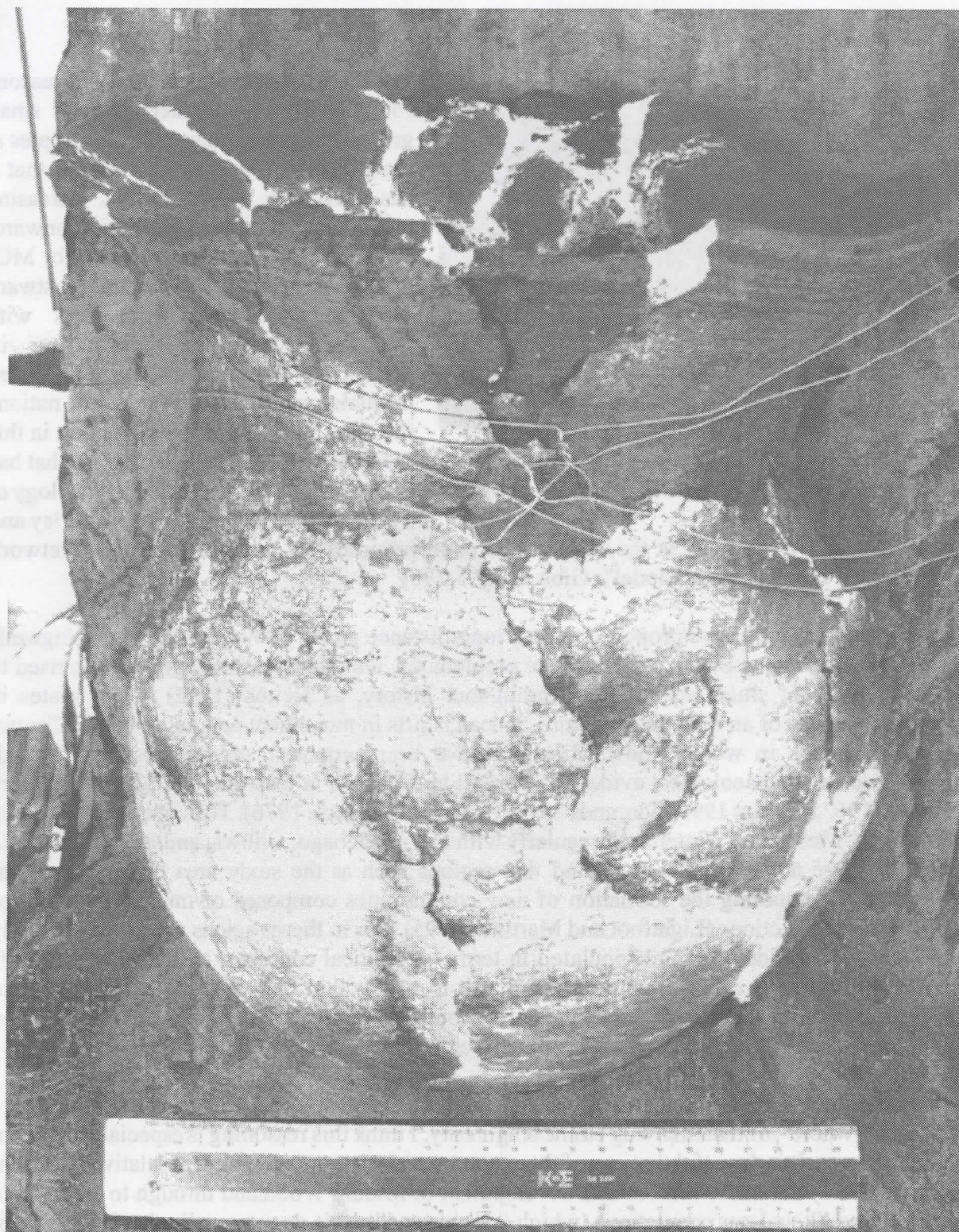
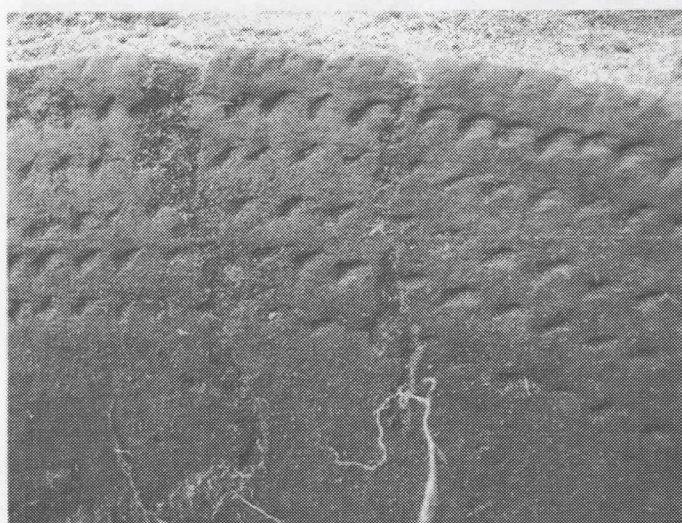


Figure 22: Springwells Phase "Mixer" Pot from Miller Site.

Pot was found encased up to neck in ground.



**Figure 23: Close-Up of Interior and Lip Decoration of
"Mixer" Pot from the Miller Site**

Discussion

While we can only speculate on the reasons for a possible encounter between small groups of Springwells and MOI peoples at the Haagsma Site, I would contend that it has to do with, at least in part, increasing population shifts from this period onward. This mobility has been proposed for MOI groups involving a continuing westward shift and increasing encounters with "Western" peoples, culminating in historically recorded warfare between Iroquoian and Central Algonquin nations (Murphy and Ferris 1990). Implicit in this movement of MOI populations is what has been likened to an expansionist ideology of a decidedly political emphasis (Varley and

Canon 1994). This strategy is the type that Gibbon proposes for the Oneota (i.e., "Network Building and Political Power Model"; Gibbon 1995:190).

The presence of what I have proposed to be a long-distance group of Western Basin Springwells peoples at the Haagsma Site is perhaps more problematic, although we should not be surprised to find these types of situations occurring throughout history, as Helms (1992) demonstrates in describing contacts of an ideological nature. Indeed, shifts in movement and alignment of Central Algonquin nations in what is now Michigan have been proposed and extrapolated through ethnohistoric and archaeological evidence, and oral tradition for at least into the fifteenth century (Callender 1962; Cremin 1996; Edmunds 1978; Grim 1994; Latorre 1976). Torrence (1989:3) states that the Fox ("Mesquakie") interacted regularly with the Winnebago, Ojibwa, and Potawatomi. We should therefore not be surprised to find that regions such as the study area involved cultural transformations, entailing the formation of new communities composed of multi-social and /or ethnic groups and factions (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995). It is in these regions where we are likely to find that (ethnic) identity is manipulated in terms of political concerns, as Jones (1997:110f) describes. With this in mind, I would argue that it is only within the parameters of a long-term regional investigation that we will be able to define contexts of potential interaction and comparison that may result in evidence of expressions of ethnicity.

It has become increasingly apparent that it is difficult to speak of an archaeologically defined culture as a cultural "whole", or that implying ethnic singularity. I think this reasoning is especially apparent in this study area. It is doubtful that any of these communities were developing in relative isolation; rather, it is likely that there is an in-situ development of Middle Woodland through to Initial Late Woodland and likely later populations (which is suggested by this documentation), which have in turn been influenced by neighbouring groups. Again, these influences are suggested by the investigations to date. Thus, what have been designated as "Western Basin Springwells" or "Middle Ontario Iroquoian" settlements documented along the Sydenham and Thames Rivers in this region

(e.g., Sherman and Bellamy Sites, and Banjo) may in fact be 'amalgamations' of varying degrees of ethnic affiliation, or perhaps, communities that were in the process of the formation of ethnic distinction (i.e., those entailing relatively flexible practices of social inclusion). Such would appear to be the case of the "MOI" contingent at the Haagsma Site.

It is difficult to say anything definite in terms of the above at the Miller Site, at least at this point in time. As a slightly later manifestation of "Western Basin" in the region (in terms of the complete vessel), located in proximity to a substantial geographic boundary (Lake/River St. Clair) the settlement may be indicative of a greater 'sense' of ethnicity (keeping in mind that most of the ceramics excavated bear closer resemblance to the later Iroquoian ceramics, such as those from the collection recovered from the Haagsma Site sand pit). The later 17th century earthworked Western Basin Wolf Phase settlements near this boundary may be the culmination of this trend. This conclusion doesn't mean that Miller was necessarily a community composed of single ethnic groups at various periods of time (and we are reminded by Jones [1997] and others of the pitfalls of assuming a one to one relationship between material culture and ethnicity). What can be suggested at this time is that there was perhaps a greater display of 'control' in artifact style (i.e., rimsherd decoration) that we are familiar with amongst the later Iroquoians, and corresponding lineage cohesion.

With the complete vessel as the only definably characteristic "Springwells" ("Mixer") ceramics to date, it may well be that the other (homogeneous) ceramics collected are indicative of a regional expression of a group that is strongly eastwardly influenced. It is also quite possible that this group was a westward shifting population related to the later Haagsma Site settlement (destroyed by the sand pit operations). Unlike the Haagsma Site (at least from the excavations to date), there is no evidence of an (obvious) merging of ceramic styles (i.e., the Springwells woven fiber technique and slip-roughening combined with plain horizontals, inward-sloping collars and other M.O.I. attributes) at the Miller Site.

This consistency in ceramic design at the Miller Site stands in contrast to the ceramic assemblages of the less substantial Bellamy and Sherman Springwells settlements located several kilometers upstream from Miller. If what I have termed as the "homogenous" (later Iroquoian-looking) ceramics are contemporaneous with the Springwells vessel excavated at the Miller Site, then the possibility of contact and interaction between ethnic 'entities' is again very real - but with less evidence to date for such a scenario than at the Haagsma Site. Again, vessel form and bodysherd treatment associated with these homogenous rimsherds is more akin to those ceramics from settlements to the east of this region, and less so to those of the west, i.e., Michigan. Obviously, a greater understanding of neighboring contemporaneous settlements to Miller is crucial in this regard.

Ethnic affiliation may not even have been as great an 'issue' at least in the (earlier) Initial Late Woodland period if, as Cherry and Renfrew (1986:157) suggest, ethnic identification is likely to have developed "as a result of patterns of prolonged interaction," in other words, these ongoing patterns provide the impetus for differentiation over time. And those patterns of interaction I would contend, while present in the Initial Late Woodland period, were not prolonged or developed to the extent that occurred thereafter. This scenario doesn't mean that the "them and us" weren't acknowledged or 'enforced,' but rather that the option of integration perhaps wasn't as great a

concern. This (that is, the mid-range Late Woodland) period in this region was therefore in all probability the scene of the 'throes' of developing ethnic affiliations and alliances. The ethnic "boundaries" were thus likely very 'blurry' in this region, and perhaps very flexible on either side of the coin (Gibbon [1995: 192] also discusses this situation in terms of the Oneota: "Ethnic Boundaries and Ethnic Styles Model"). These boundaries however, perhaps became less blurry near the Lake/River St. Clair divide, particularly from the 15th century onward. This type of scenario is also suggested from the excavations at the Miller Site to date.

Further, if we are to lend credence to linguistic interpretations, the Proto-Central Algonquin (Eastern Great Lakes) ancestor language 'split' into the historically documented groups did not occur until sometime in the Late Middle Woodland period (Syms 1982). The "younger languages," i.e., Fox (including Sauk, Kickapoo, and Mascouten dialects) including Shawnee as the "Southern" group, and the Ojibway/Potawatomi as the "Northern" group (Rhodes 1988), likely therefore did not fully develop until well into the Late Woodland. Denny (1994) proposes that these language families have their roots in the Hopewell complexes to the west and south. It is also important to emphasize here that, as Gibbon (1995:179) asserts, based on ethnohistoric cases of ethnic 'fluidity', that the "political alignments that emerge are rarely based on ethnolinguistic criteria," such that "alliances often were composed of kin groups that emphasized various identities and operated through different networks depending on the situation." 'Emerging' however, were socio-political alliances nonetheless, and the Haagsma and Miller Sites may have been expressions of this trend.

It may be increasingly apparent here that while my 'pick' of an ethnic label for the Western Basin Springwells group at Haagsma would be "Central Algonquin" based on the evidence given, that Central Algonquin affiliation may be but a degree of that expression, accompanied by other ethnic associations (including those designated as "Mississippian" or "Sandusky"). Further, since this is such a small group at Haagsma, as is the MOI group, for that matter, the possibility that either were associated with a larger social unit is substantial, which in turn may well have been composed of a mixture of developing ethnic influences. Perhaps then we should be regarding apparent cultural manifestations, particularly in these apparent "frontier" areas and during this time period, as expressions of indications of developing polities of various ethnic persuasion, rather than absolute entities as such. Furthermore, the ceramic styles found in particular on the "Cluster B" vessels at Haagsma may be more of a 'statement' of contact than of ethnic identity per se. The Miller Site on the other hand may be representative of more of a "crystalization" or division of ethnic identity(s), however, greater comparative artifact and settlement samples from neighboring settlements is needed in order to gain an understanding of this particular region.

In summary, those points that I've discussed that suggest a "likely" scenario for interaction of some form at the Haagsma Site, and this region in general (excluding Miller at this point) are:

1. Distinctive Springwells ceramic traits (i.e., woven fiber impressions) appear on ceramics with otherwise characteristic MOI traits (plain horizontal impressions). These traits also include bodysherd treatment in either case.
2. Distinct rimsherds of both affiliations appear side by side in a feature context (i.e., paired rimsherds in two feature contexts, with little other ceramics present, and distinct awls combined in

post mold and feature contexts).

3. The small Springwells ceramic vessels, bearing no evidence of cooking (carbon encrustation/charring), may have been intended as trade vessels.
4. The distinctive Springwells settlement and subsistence pattern reflecting alterations to the longhouse and possible 'accommodations' by the MOI group.
5. The apparent emphasis on an offering/meeting by the Springwells group (i.e., remains of a 'feast', and "Calumet" style pipe bowl).
6. The Springwells group were in all likelihood long-distance travellers (i.e., ceramic traits that are common in Michigan), making the journey upstream an unlikely hunting trip only, for example.
7. This region was the scene of much movement and ethnic transformation on behalf of both Iroquoian and Western Basin populations during this time period.
8. Neighboring ethnic groups interact - frequently.

Finally, this region of southwestern Ontario in the fourteenth century was in all likelihood the scene of a number of possibilities of interaction between existing heterogeneous groups, migrating populations, and long-distance contacts. Therefore, this zone likely involved cases of negotiations pertaining to these influences including those of resource, territory, and ideological natures. Additionally, as far as an "Iroquoian" push westward (as an ethnic 'totality') goes, this may have entailed very selective 'leapfrogging' in terms of settlement location in a peripheral land. The Sydenham River in the vicinity of present day Alvinston may well have been one of the 'landing pads,' incorporating an extant population(s), and/or with the latter groups themselves developing in situ and incorporating influences east and west, etc. Another landing pad may have occurred in the vicinity of the Dresden area, judging from the reported Late Woodland settlements that have unfortunately been destroyed. Coincidentally or not, this is also a perimeter of the high-banked sandy bluffs bordering the Sydenham River. Needless to say, much more investigation needs to be done in this region in order to gain better insight in terms of any of these possibilities; again, a case for a long-term framework of investigation. Future activities will also include the continued documentation of evidence of 18th century Chippewa settlement along the Sydenham ("Bear Creek", or River "Jonquakamik").

Arguably, with enough "CRM" activity in the future, the 'dots' will be connected, and many of the gaps in our understanding of regional settlement patterns will be filled. During this time, much of southwestern Ontario will be filled (as certain regions are now) with all manner of development, whether subdivisions, golf courses, roads, and pipelines and industry. Much of the natural environment and agricultural areas will continue to dwindle as a result of this, of course. First Nations concerns have also been voiced over the dilemma of "development archaeology." Fortunately, little industrial/commercial development is occurring along the Sydenham, and it remains to provide us with 'fodder' for our understanding of cultural heritage without the 'trade-off' of a shopping mall. It doesn't pay the bills in my case (another job does that), but it provides me with

the interest that I experienced when I first started walking fields way back when.

Acknowledgments

Since I began investigating Late Woodland settlement located along the Sydenham watershed in earnest since the early 1990's, there have been numerous individuals who have volunteered their time and skills to the cause. Their combined efforts have contributed to our understanding of this little known region. Landowners who have allowed access to their properties have of course been vital in this regard, and many of these individuals have also contributed with collections and site information. I am thankful for the support of the Ontario Heritage Foundation, and Neal Ferris, Ministry of Culture, Archaeology and Heritage Planning Branch, London. I am also grateful to Dean Jacobs, Walpole Island First Nation Heritage Center, and Del and Kelly Riley, Chippewa of the Thames First Nation Land Claims Research. Lastly, the Kominek and Carter families of Dresden continue to be instrumental in their support of the project. This paper is based in part on a paper presented at 33rd Annual Meeting of the Canadian Archaeological Association, Ottawa, May 3-7, 2000: Session on Ethnicity and Interaction.

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CHAPTER NEWS

The February ~~15~~⁸, 2007 meeting of the London Chapter, OAS will be the 30th anniversary, almost to the day, of the first meeting of the London Chapter held in February 1977. This meeting will be the perennial favourite, Member's Night, with several short presentations by members. As always, Chris Ellis is looking for members to do presentations, not only at member's night but at future meetings, so contact him if you wish to participate (cjellis@uwo.ca). We will be starting the meeting earlier (6:30 PM) as, in celebration of our anniversary, the chapter will be providing a buffet dinner beforehand. Please see details on the red paper handout enclosed with this Kewa mailing and RSVP if you are attending by February 8, 2007.